politics

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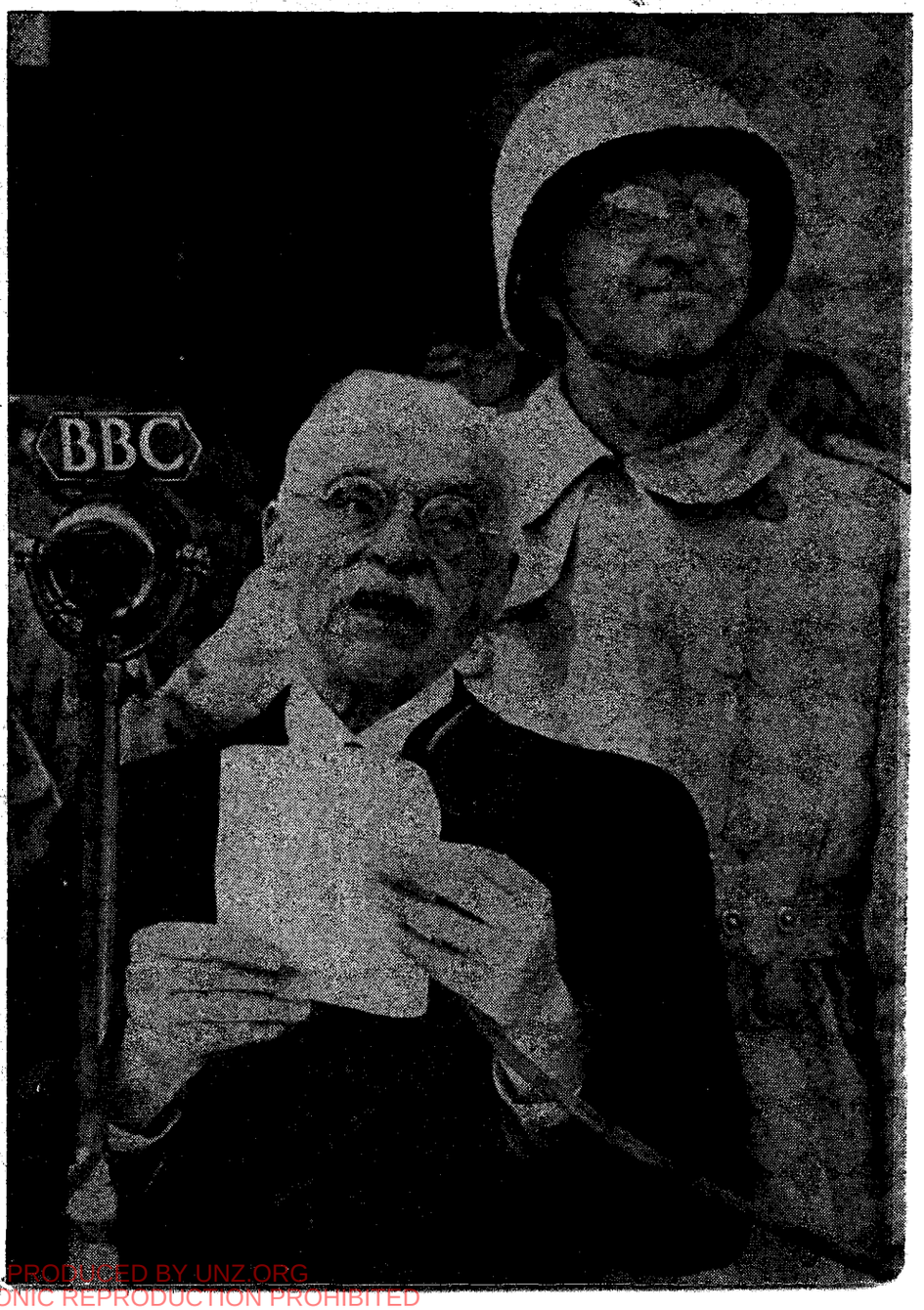
NOTICE TO READERS

For reasons beyond our control, this issue is 3 weeks late. Sorry. Future issues will appear more promptly.

"Native Politics"

The Mayor of Cherbourg speaks over the British Broadcasting Company network after the "liberation" of the city. The fellow with the smile: an American general. (Credit: Press Association, Inc.)



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Comment

Some Reflections on What Is Laughingly Called "National Politics"

Much Ado about Wallace The Democratic Convention was as lively as the Republican was cut-and-dried, a difference which most commentators attributed to the fact that Democratic conventions are "traditionally" more uproarious than Republican ones. Actually, it was because the Republican left wing had been eliminated before the convention by the withdrawal of Willkie, while the Democratic left was still alive and kicking—at the beginning of the convention, at least. But what kind of a "left" was it? What was all the excitement about? There were two issues which aroused real political passion: the Negro plank, on which more later, and the contest for the vice-presidential nomination. The former was a real issue, and I think it significant that it is much more of an issue in both the Republican and the Democratic camps than anything connected with organized labor or with general economic policy. The question of race relations has become the dominant social issue of today, displacing, for the moment at least, the traditional class-struggle kind of issues.

The struggle over Wallace seems to me to have been a sham battle except in a highly symbolic sense: that is, Wallace was supported and opposed according to whether one's sympathies lay to the left or right of center, but both sides were wasting energy and it made little practical difference whether he won or lost (just as it has made little practical difference that he has been Roosevelt's vice-president since 1940—or is it since 1936?).

The sensation of the convention was the unexpected strength of the CIO's Political Action Committee as a pressure group. Most commentators, conservative as well as liberal, agreed that the PAC was the strongest single influence at the convention. It forced Roosevelt to junk his first choice for a running mate, Jimmy Byrnes, and it put up a good fight on behalf of Wallace against the united opposition of Roosevelt, the Southern Democrats and the big city bosses. PAC has spent some $300,000 to date and talks in terms of $3 million before the campaign is over; it has created a big-name "citizens' committee", has put out a vast deal of slickly written pamphlets and professionally designed posters, and has hired a large staff of expert publicists and administrators. And what was this mighty engine used for at the convention? To liberalize Roosevelt's foreign policy? No, Murray of the CIO made no issue on this before the platform committee; in fact, the official CIO foreign policy plank was almost identical with the plank that was adopted. Perhaps to advance labor's economic interests? No, although the CIO top officials have for months been trying to break the Little Steel formula, which they ceaselessly denounce as a veritable cross on which labor is crucified, they said not a word about this at Chicago—despite the fact that the Republicans had inserted a clause opposing the formula in their platform. To win labor some representation in the top policy posts of the war effort? Not a word on this either. To insist on a declaration in favor of racial democracy at least as strong as that in the Republican platform? Heaven forbid! The CIO's own Negro plank, which Murray presented with all the impetuousness of a man handling a stick of dynamite, did not go as far as the Republicans had gone; nor was there any publicly expressed dissatisfaction from CIO quarters with the vague and brief statement to which the Southerners were able to reduce the Negro plank.

All the PAC's high-powered machinery was used for one purpose only: to secure the vice-presidential nomination for Wallace. The liberal weeklies had their usual conniption fits over the Iowa seer; "ROOSEVELT IS NOT ENOUGH", sadly editorialized *The New Republic*, while *PM* devoted enough wood pulp to the ins and outs of this great issue to reforest New York state.* The general line was that Wallace was a symbol of liberalism and that his renomination would symbolize the perpetuation of the New Deal. I think it is true that Wallace is a symbol, but that is precisely and just all that he is. Few political leaders have been as ineffectual as he in action. The ludicrous fight with Jesse Jones is a case in point, when Wallace heroically charged the enemy (big business) and succeeded in getting himself kicked out of his Board of Economic Warfare, which was quietly put to death itself a few months later. (That great liberal leader, Roosevelt, to whom Wallace vows undying devotion as regularly as a Catholic crosses himself, was of course the kicker.) The only thing Wallace is really good at is making grandiose liberalistic speeches which lavish on the "common people" promissory notes on the future—notes which are never dated and hence never fall

* It is with sadness I note that I. F. Stone wrote an exceptionally silly article in the *Nation* entitled "Henry A. Wallace—a Great American"; and concluding: "I think we may count our country fortunate in having in a single generation two leaders of the stature and vision of Franklin D. Roosevelt and Henry A. Wallace." In the course of his rhapsody, Stone stated (incorrectly) that Roosevelt was backing Wallace for the nomination, and predicted (incorrectly) that the nomination was in the bag for Wallace. Stone's Washington column used to be a solid patch in the *Nation* quagmire; he has a nose for data, and shows considerable energy and some courage in digging into scandals; perhaps no other journalist has done as much as he in the way uncovering capitist skullduggery in the Roosevelt war administration. But his courage and energy desert him when it comes to drawing conclusions from the material he amasses. It is true that if he did so, he would not last very long as a star contributor to the *Nation* and *PM*. But the alternative is to sink to the intellectual level of those publications, and Stone's recent stuff seems to indicate that this is what has happened.

politics

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due. That the PAC should have devoted all its energies to renominating such a figure indicates the kind of shadow-boxing politics it is playing. There is also a certain cynicism, probably only half conscious, behind the liblabs' efforts to exploit Wallace as a symbol. Cf. the naive remark of I. F. Stone in the *Nation* that Wallace's renomination "might solve a leading Democratic problem. The party can weasel or keep silent on the Negro question in the platform, thus placating the Southerners, and still carry the bulk of the Negro vote by renominating Wallace." Save the surface and you save all.

The bogus nature of the whole struggle was revealed in the comments by the PAC leaders and by Wallace after the battle was lost. After having inflated the issue to the dimensions of Armageddon and given thousands of honest liblabs gooseflesh at the horrid consequences to human progress of a Democratic ticket in 1944 without Wallace, the leaders of the crusade, once the votes were in, swallowed hard, grinned, and said that Truman was a wonderful fellow, too. Hillman was the most restrained; he actually admitted that the CIO "regretted" Wallace's defeat, but hastened to add that "the winning ticket of Roosevelt and Truman" would have the CIO's "wholehearted support." Murray and Wallace not only pledged allegiance to the winner but even insisted that the outcome was a great stride forward for liberalism. Stating that the CIO was "eminently satisfied" with the nomination of Truman, Murray went on: "We are deeply conscious of the fact that the liberal elements of the Democratic Party made splendid progress in the convention." Wallace assured reporters: "I am very happy about it—really I am." Asked if he would support the ticket, he replied, "of course", continuing: "I don't look upon my defeat as a blow to liberalism. I think what has happened here is that there has been a real start toward a final liberalism in the Democratic Party." And a moment later he was reiterating his faith in the common man's friend, Roosevelt, who had just shown his worthiness of the title, presumably, by knifing Wallace, also the common man's friend. This is not the way the leaders of a fight for basic principles talk after a defeat. Whatever else these liblab leaders may be, I think it is fair to say they are not politically serious.

Three important conclusions can be drawn from the 1944 Democratic Convention:

(1) Roosevelt's ditching of Wallace (whom he forced the 1940 Convention to nominate) shows that he thinks labor and the liberals have no place else to go except the Democratic Party, now that the Political Action Committee has relegated a progressive third-party movement to the distant future. Hence his policies will continue their rightward trend of the last few years. This trend, which corresponds both to Roosevelt's personal predilections and to the requirements of his role as a bourgeois leader, can only be reversed if Roosevelt fears he will lose the support of the liblabs to a third party movement. In the curious kind of politics Roosevelt plays, the more faithfully you follow his leadership, the less he does for you—a fact of life which the Southern Democrats found out long ago but which has yet to be discovered by the labor movement.

(2) At Chicago, the PAC was only too glad to give the reactionary Democrats anything they wanted in the way of a platform provided only it got Wallace for vice-president. But with the best will in the world, PAC found itself unable to "cooperate" with the big city bosses and the Southerners, since it takes two to cooperate, and the latter were admirably "class conscious" even if the former were not. In these days, the intensity of class consciousness generally increases as one moves rightward.

(3) The Democratic Party would now seem to be firmly in the grasp of the big city machines (Hague, Hannegan, Kelly, Flynn) and the Southerners; Roosevelt would seem to have decisively thrown in his lot with them. The chances for that revival of the New Deal which the liblabs have been wistfully hoping for would seem to be dimmer than ever. Their post-convention line is that Chicago is the first great battle, the Marengo so to speak, of a long series which will culminate in the capture of the party from within by the leftwing. I should say it is rather Waterloo, and that progress in future will be made only from outside both major parties, in a third party movement.

Hail to the Commander-in-Chief! Roosevelt's letter stating he would accept the Democratic nomination was not lengthy, and yet it mentioned three times the fact that he is Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces. He delivered his acceptance speech from a naval base, and called attention to that fact twice in the course of the speech. The speakers at the Democratic Convention dwelt lovingly on the Commander-in-Chief theme, with a tribute to Roosevelt which recalls the litanies to Stalin in the Soviet press "All mankind is his debter. His life and service have been a great blessing to humanity." (At the United Auto Workers' convention in Buffalo last fall I noticed the same tendency to emphasize Roosevelt's role as Commander-in-Chief rather than as President, especially in the speeches of the Stalinists, veteran totalitarians.) What makes this emphasis politically sinister is also what makes it politically effective: the implication that the Commander-in-Chief, unlike the President, is "above politics" and hence, to carry out the logical implications to the end, should not be *elected* at all.

Roosevelt has boldly struck precisely this note. In explaining why he feels it proper to seek a fourth term—and, at the risk of being considered a Republican fuddyduddy, I must say I think there *are* dangers in the same man serving for more than two consecutive presidential terms—he takes the line that, as Commander-in-Chief, he has "his superior officer—the people of the United States." "If the people command me to continue in this office and in this war, I have as little right to withdraw as the soldier has to leave his post in the line." Looking down from this lofty conception of military duty, Roosevelt sees political campaigning as undignified, and even a little vulgar. "I would accept and serve, but I would not run, in the usual partisan, political sense." The idea that The Leader is above politics because he is the servant of the people—here reinforced by the military appeal—is the essence of totalitarian politics. In his acceptance speech, he struck the same note: "I shall not campaign, in the usual sense, for the office. In these days of tragic sorrow, I do not consider it fitting. Besides, in these days of global warfare, I shall not be able to find the time." This attitude of lofty consecration was shattered comically by the very next sentence: "I shall, however, feel free to report to the people the facts about matters of concern to them and especially to correct any misrepresentations." Under the head of "correcting misrepresentations", he proceeded with gusto to take the hide off the Republicans. His acceptance speech is a hybrid affair; part of it sounds like Hitler or Stalin, part of it is the usual campaign abuse of his opponent in the good oldfashioned American style. A symbol, perhaps, of the present situation over here: not yet ripe for totalitarianism, and yet with the seeds already sprouting.

The seeds would seem to be even more mature in Wallace, who is perhaps the best current specimen of a "totali-

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tarian liberal." He has just the right combination of idealism, opportunism and woolly-wittedness. Only Wallace could have delivered a speech, as he did on his recent Asiatic tour, in Irkutsk, deep in Stalin's Siberian prison-house, making an analogy with the pioneer epoch of our own West and declaring that "men born in wide free spaces will not brook injustice" and "will not even temporarily live in slavery." To savor the full strength of this episode, imagine Teddy Roosevelt visiting the Czar's Siberia and exclaiming: "Freedom and open spaces . . . free, upstanding citizens living The Strenuous Life. . . . Bully!" But the comparison is pale: Stalin's Siberia makes the Czar's look like a Boy Scout encampment. "I can bear witness," continued Wallace to the assembled and stupefied prison-camp wardens of Irkutsk, "I can bear witness to the willingness with which your citizens give their utmost efforts in mines, aircraft factories, and metallurgical works." On which David J. Dallin, a leading authority on Russia, commented in *The New Leader* of July 8: "It so happens that the recently emerged industry of this region has been built and is being operated largely by the man-power of the labor camps of Eastern Sibera. These camps, consisting of deportees, convicts, and 'socially dangerous' elements, are among the saddest features of our sad times. Mr. Wallace, in speaking of the inmates' 'willingness' to work, was unwittingly ironical." The "unwitting" is just, I think: Wallace is genuinely mush-headed, incapable of realistic thinking; and he is aided to such judgments as the above by a deep and probably unconscious instinct for keeping open his lines of communication with the centers of state power—which is why, also, he regularly replies to the brutal kicks he gets from Roosevelt by renewed protestations of loyalty.

As one might expect, the darling of the PAC has gone even farther than his chief in using the kind of political smear tactics brought to a high pitch of perfection in the totalitarian states. In this campaign, as in 1940, it is Wallace whose special contribution is the argument that a vote for Dewey is a vote for Hitler and Tojo. In 1940 he said: "I want to emphasize that replacement of Mr. Roosevelt, even if it were by the most patriotic leadership that could be found, would cause Hitler to rejoice. . . . I do not believe the American people will turn their backs on the man that Hitler wants to see defeated." In 1944: "A Dewey victory, no matter how estimable Mr. Dewey himself may be personally, will inevitably give hope to the wrong element in Germany and Japan." At the convention, he exclaimed that the only people who dislike Roosevelt are "Germans, Japs and certain American troglodytes." The "troglodytes" seems to be an escape clause, for which I am grateful. *Pithecanthropus erectus,* move over!

Dewey as Myth Buster

"You can't help liking Democrats" Freda Kirchwey began her account for the Convention, and, after listing various rather

News-Story-of-the-Year

A companion piece to the news-picture-of-the-year printed on the first page is "Europe as G.I.'s See It", a story which appeared in the June 30 issue of the conservative weekly, U. S. News. *In replying to Don Calhoun's "Political Relevance of Conscientious Objection" last month, I noted: "It is possible, even likely that the millions of American troops who will occupy Europe in the next few years will be confronted with popular revolutionary movements which will appeal to their sympathies and will pose to them the classic soldier's choice in a revolutionary situation: whether to obey his officers or his feelings." The* U. S. News *story-of-the-year suggests that this is already beginning to worry American officials. The article follows:*

"The fundamental situation brought to light as the Allied armies advance in France and Italy is this:

"Members of a small minority are in good financial circumstances. They are the ones who are enjoying night-life, who are able to shop in well-stocked stores. They can get expensive wines, cosmetics, musical instruments, smart frocks, silk stockings. They eat in good cafes. They sleep between freshly laundered sheets. They keep up the luxurious standards of high society. . . . Many members of this group have collaborated with the Nazis and Fascists and in return have been favored in various ways. . . . Whatever the reason for their privileges, Allied soldiers are shocked to find them untouched by the devastation of war.

"The big majority, in contrast, has been living from hand to mouth . . . on a near-starvation diet. They could get enough of the right kind of food only in the black market. And they had no money with which to buy in the black market where prices were bid up by the rich. In Southern Italy . . . hunger is widespread. . . . All over Europe there is a severe shortage of fats and proteins. . . . Poverty and malnutrition are the lot of most of the people in the occupied countries.

"The contrasting situation of these two groups is posing a difficult choice for Allied officials.

"*One course* would be in the direction of change. New governments would be encouraged in which political power would be taken away from the small minority and spread equally among all the people. Then the people themselves would have an opportunity to adopt measures that would wipe out the special economic advantages now enjoyed by the few.

"*Another course* would tend to maintain the status quo. Ruling groups that long have had power, and have managed to hold on to much of that power under the Fascists, and Nazis, would be supported. The wide gap between the scale of living of the ruling groups and that of the masses would be ignored or would be lessened through temporary measures of relief.

"This second course appears to be the one that has been chosen by the British and U. S. governments. In England, Prime Minister Churchill attaches great importance to the "monarchical principle." In this country, Secretary of State Cordell Hull says U. S. foreign policy is built around the idea of stability. And temporary relief for the masses of Europe is being planned through the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration.

"*Dissatisfaction* with this policy of maintaining the status quo is beginning to show up, however. The indignation of soldiers over the attitude of the privileged groups in Italy and France is being reflected in the stories sent back by war correspondents. The soldiers want to know why they should be expected to fight and possibly sacrifice their lives just to bolster up the position of these groups. . . . "

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trivial reasons for her preference, wound up with the clincher: "You like them because they are not Republicans." The same spirit is observable in *The New Leader's* editorial of July 15, entitled "Roosevelt Without Illusions." Admitting that the Democratic Party is largely based on reactionary big city machines in the North and even more reactionary elements in the South, that Roosevelt "has made his peace with key monopoly groups", and that his foreign policy shows "tendencies towards imperialism", the editors nevertheless state: "We are for Roosevelt because we are against Dewey and the distinct possibility that a Republican administration would emasculate the progressive and labor laws in the country and wipe out the New Deal gains." To vote for Roosevelt because one is against Dewey is, of course, the classic "lesser evil" choice which the Left has been making for a long time now and which, in my opinion, is largely responsible for the uninterrupted series of defeats it has suffered. It is the same choice which most liblabs have made in the present war: we are for the United Nations not because there is any positive progressive dynamism in their present leadership but because we are against Hitler. But why must one make this choice? If things get to a certain pitch of rottenness, and I think they have long since reached that stage, one must, if one is to make any real progress, reject *both* existing alternatives in favor of a third which undercuts both. If this third does not exist, one must set about creating it.

But is it true that "a Republican administration would . . . wipe out the New Deal gains?" I don't think so, and, if I had to choose between Roosevelt and Dewey (which I don't), I think Dewey would be my man—if only because his victory and subsequent behavior in office would shatter the myth of Roosevelt's progressivism. How would Dewey's policies differ, in essentials, from Roosevelt's in 1945-1949? Like Roosevelt, he would feed, as cheaply as possible, the millions of postwar unemployed. Like Roosevelt, he would spend government money, as little as possible, if the economy gets into too deep a hole. Trade unionism is here to stay, a respectable and indeed essential part of the capitalist structure; Dewey's flirtations with labor leaders, and his platform's declarations for the Wagner Act and against the Little Steel formula are evidence that he understands this if the liberals don't. Will he commit political suicide by trying to repeal Roosevelt's social security and wage-and-hour legislation (both of which are specifically endorsed in his platform)? Can his race relations policies be any more reactionary than those of Roosevelt, tied as he is to the Solid South? Now that Roosevelt has put the preservation of American "sovereignty" first as a postwar aim, and has released his own extremely modest plan for the new world order, a plan compared to which Wilson's League was a grandiose experiment in international cooperation, can one honestly detect much difference between the two parties on this issue? And even if one could, would it be especially significant, from a progressive viewpoint, since the content of Roosevelt's foreign policy, whatever its form, is by now so clearly revealed as imperialist? And finally, could Dewey be any more responsive to the wishes of big business, and could he give businessmen any more prominent place in the governmental apparatus (and labor any less) than Roosevelt since 1937?

The arch-Republican *U. S. News* puts it clearly—once more, one is struck with how much more realistically conservatives view the world these days than liblabs:

"Basic fact is that both parties project Government deeply into the economic life of the nation. . . . Both accept Government protection of labor unions. Both accept Government support for agriculture. Both accept more social security. So the idea of return to the good old days of individualism and laissez-faire is dead. Only question now is which party administers Government controls and in whose interest. That's the underlying meaning of the 1944 party conventions."

The No. 1 Issue in 1944: Racial Equality

It was, as we used to say in the old days, "no accident" that the issue which hung up the Democratic platform committee for two full days and which aroused more passion than any other question at the Convention was the racial issue. In American politics today, this is the one issue which really cuts to the bottom of things and so has an intrinsically revolutionary dynamic. For to give the 13 million colored Americans first-class citizenship would mean a social upheaval of the first magnitude: in the South, the whole structure of society would be shattered; and even in the rest of the country, the consequences would be much more drastic than most people realize. (I sometimes think that only the Southern reactionaries really understand just how deepgoing the effects of a serious attempt to bring about racial equality would be.) It is, of course, true that to realize the aspirations of the working-class would necessitate an even more revolutionary change. At the moment, however, these aspirations have no mass expression; the unions have been integrated smoothly into the capitalist structure, and political action independent of the two major parties seems still distant. Labor grumbles about the Little Steel formula, the War Labor Board, the inequities of Roosevelt's stabilization program, but such grumbling is not much more meaningful than the traditional "bitching" that goes on in the armed forces. The Reuther Plan and the other ambitious bids made by the CIO for partnership status in running the domestic war effort never got anywhere, and their proponents showed how lightly they took the whole business by subsiding quietly. The Negroes, on the other hand, since their position was much worse, have not subsided but have become steadily more aggressive since the war began. Both the opportunities of a war economy in desperate need of manpower and the ideology of a war against a racist enemy have worked to strengthen the Negroes' determination and to weaken the whites' resistance. The Democratic Party is in the unfortunate positon of including both the Negroes' most ardent white supporters and also their most determined opponents. Hence the fireworks at Chicago.

The two days' deadlock on the issue was finally broken by a telegram from Roosevelt containing a "compromise" plank which was adopted. Like most Rooseveltian "compromises", this gave the liberals the phrases (and not much of these) and the conservatives the content. Although the platform contained a number of specific commitments to action—on such issues as reciprocal trade treaties and equal rights for women—the Negro plank was philosophical and hortatory rather than programmatic: "We believe that racial and religious minorities have the right to live, develop and vote equally with all citizens and to share the rights that are guaranteed by our Constitution. Congress should exert its full constitutional powers to protect those rights." The rightward evolution of Roosevelt's party appears when this is compared with the Negro plank in the 1940 Democratic platform, which was three times as long, much more specific, and which ventured to use the fearsome word, "Negro", three times. The change reflects Roosevelt's strategy, which has been to let the South have

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its way as much as possible on the Negro issue. Thus he took no public position during the long Congressional struggles over the FEPC and the poll tax, and allowed Administration leaders in Congress on occasion to oppose these measures; nor has he said or done anything against the Jimcrow policies of the armed forces (of which, as his supporters constantly remind us, he is Commander-in-Chief); nor did he venture a single word last summer in condemnation of the terrible Detroit race riots.

It is hard to think of any reason a Negro should vote Democratic this fall. The Republicans are well aware of the golden opportunity offered them, and also of the strategic importance of the colored vote, which may be decisive in a close election. It is a political fact of the first magnitude that in the four biggest states—New York, Pennsylvania, Illinois and Ohio—with 135 of the 531 electoral votes, the potential Negro vote is larger than the majorities by which Roosevelt carried those states in 1940. Therefore, Dewey intones at Lincoln's tomb: "It is a fitting occasion to renew our determination to bring complete equality of opportunity of life in America to all the Negro people." Therefore, the Republican platform is not only more progressive on the Negro issue than the Democratic platform and than the 1940 Republican platform, but even than Willkie's personal "platform" (this being the only issue on which the party went further than Willkie in a liberal direction). It specifically promised (1) enactment of a Federal anti-lynch law (2) elimination of the poll tax via constitutional amendment (a gift horse, incidentally, whose mouth needs inspection, since the Southern states could almost certainly block such an amendment), (3) a permanent FEPC, and (4) "an immediate Congressional inquiry to ascertain the extent to which mistreatment, segregation and discrimination against Negroes who are in our armed forces are impairing morale and efficiency, and the adoption of corrective legislation."

This remarkable plank, perhaps the best the colored people have ever gotten out of a major party, attests more to the sincerity of the Republicans' desire for the Negro vote than to the sincerity of their feelings for the Negroes. Their Congressmen have not done much in the past on these issues, leaving the honor of leading the battles for a Federal anti-lynch bill, a permanent FEPC and the abolition of the poll tax pretty much to the progressive Democrats. Dewey himself acted badly this spring when he refused to take any action on some recommendations for racial legislation submitted to him by a committee of Negroes and whites which he himself had appointed; he dodged by saying more study was needed, and appointed another committee. Nor did he show up well in an interview with Negro newspapermen after the Republican platform had been published. "Did he favor continuation of racial segregation in the army, he was asked. That was a very difficult question, the Governor said, since he did not feel qualified to pass judgment on the military problems involved, but he was in favor of ending it as soon as possible." (*N. Y. Times*, June 30.) All questions involving race relations today are "difficult questions", much too difficult for little Tom Dewey — or big Franklin Roosevelt.

One can imagine what a combination of the Negro and the labor vote, organized in a third party with a progressive platform which would also appeal to millions of small farmers and "little people" of the white-collar groups, one can imagine what this might effect in this campaign. One can also imagine a world in which the common people acted with as much consciousness of their interests as those on top of the heap seem to have of *their* interests. Such a world is still not with us, and in this campaign the Negroes are therefore confronted with a frankly reactionary Democratic Party (though Roosevelt, if he thinks it necessary, is quite capable of making some grandstand play for the Negro vote before November), and a covertly reactionary Republican Party. Like the rest of us, they have nowhere to go (having at least this much equality). But their spirited insistence on their human rights is one of the few bright spots in the wartime picture over here, and may be one of the foundation stones of a future third-party movement.

CAPTAIN RICKENBACKER ON THE SOVIET UNION

A devastating expose of the realities of social relations in the Soviet Union today was the interview which Captain Edward V. Rickenbacker gave to the American press when he got back from an official tour of Russia last summer. Many of our readers have probably seen it, but for the benefit of those who have not—and to keep green the memory of a classic document, we reprint its gist here. It is perhaps unnecessary to add that Captain Rickenbacker, who heads a big airline company, is as reasonable a facsimile of a fascist as can be found in the ranks of American big business.

The N. Y. Times of Aug. 18, 1943, reported his reactions:

Captain Rickenbacker remarked that whereas for the last several years Russia has been moving to the right, the United States, at the same time, has been "tending to the left."

"If they keep going on as they are you'll find Russia coming out of this war the greatest democracy in the world, while if we keep going on the way we are we'll be where they were twenty-five years ago," he declared.

"Do you mean to suggest that Russia is moving toward capitalism while we are moving toward bolshevism?" Captain Rickenbacker was asked.

"Yes, in a sense," he replied.

Asked whether he attributed the tendency in this country to the Administration, Captain Rickenbacker replied that he referred to the "Administration" as well as to other factors.

Among the things he was particularly impressed with in Russia was the iron discipline in industrial plants, severe punishment for chronic absenteeism, to the extent of removal from the job to the bread line, incentive pay, compulsory overtime work, and "no labor difficulties." The Russians, Captain Rickenbacker said, work eight hours a day, six days a week, with an additional three hours a day overtime at time and one-half.

"This is compulsory for everybody but married women with children," he said. "All employes in all plants in Russia are on the incentive plan with a minimum base wage for all. For quality and quantity they are paid in additional wages first, and for outstanding effort on the part of employes additional quantity and quality of food is added to the increased wages.

"They have no absenteeism problem... If an employe is twenty minutes late he is reprimanded. If he continues to appear late, he is given a trial by a court of employes, and, if found guilty, his wages are cut first. Continued abuse brings about a cut in the amount of food rationed. If a flagrant case appears, the employe is discharged as being unqualified to contribute to the war effort and consequently finds himself in the bread line.

"Bolshevism in Russia is not what we have been led to believe by communistic enthusiasts in this country. They have been constantly turning to the right, as evidenced in many ways, during the last twelve months. Nowhere in the world have I seen so much respect for progressive rank in the Army as I witnessed in Russia from the bottom to the top, which is in the direction of capitalism and democracy. Officers' uniforms have in great measure been copied from the old Czaristic designs, and the press is selling pre-revolutionary heroes to the people."

Captain Rickenbacker was quite certain that Stalin's dissolution of the Communist Internationale was sincere and permanent, saying that "anyone who knows his history knows that Stalin has been opposed to world revolution."

Asked whether he expected that the Russian way of dealing with absenteeism and the labor problem might be introduced in the United States, Captain Rickenbacker said, "Well, you heard Mr. Byrnes (James F. Byrnes, War Mobilization Director) on the radio last night. We seem to be moving in that direction, although it won't be as drastic as in Russia, perhaps."

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Behavior in Extreme Situations

Bruno Bettelheim

THE author spent approximately one year in the two biggest German concentration camps for political prisoners, at Dachau and at Buchenwald. During this time he made observations and collected material, part of which will be presented in this paper. It is not the intention of this presentation to recount once more the horror story of the German concentration camp for political prisoners.

It is assumed that the reader is roughly familiar with it, but it should be reiterated that the prisoners were deliberately tortured.[1] They were inadequately clothed, but nevertheless exposed to heat, rain, and freezing temperatures as long as seventeen hours a day, seven days a week. They suffered from extreme malnutrition, but had to perform hard labor.[2] Every single moment of their lives was strictly regulated and supervised. They were never permitted to see any visitors, nor a minister. They were not entitled to any medical care and when they received it, it was rarely administered by medically trained persons.[3] The prisoners did not know exactly why they were imprisoned, and never knew for how long. This may explain why we shall speak of the prisoners as persons finding themselves in an "extreme" situation.

The acts of terror committed in these camps arouse in the minds of civilized persons justified and strong emotions, and those emotions lead them sometimes to overlook that terror is, as far as the Gestapo is concerned, only a means for attaining certain ends.[4] By using extravagant means which fully absorb the investigator's interest, the Gestapo only too often succeeds in hiding its real purposes. One of the reasons that this happens so frequently in respect to the concentration camps is that the persons most able to discuss them are former prisoners, who obviously are more interested in what happened to them than in why it happened. If one desires to understand the purposes of the Gestapo, and the ways in which they are attained, emphasis on what happened to particular persons would be erroneous. According to the well-known ideology of the Nazi state the individual as such is either nonexistent or of no importance. An investigation of the purposes of the concentration camps must, therefore, emphasize not individual acts of terror, but their transindividual purposes and results.

Anticipating the results of this discussion and of further investigations, it may be said that the results which the Gestapo tried to obtain by means of the camps are varied; the author thinks that he was able to recognize some of them: . . . *to break the prisoners as individuals* and to change them into docile masses from which no individual or group act of resistance could arise; *to spread terror among the rest of the population* by using the prisoners as hostages for good behavior, and by demonstrating what happens to those who oppose the Nazi rulers; *to provide the Gestapo members with a training ground* in which they are so educated as to lose all human emotions and attitudes and learn the most effective ways of breaking resistance in a defenseless civilian population; *to provide the Gestapo with an experimental laboratory* in which to study the effective means for breaking civilian resistance, the minimum food, hygienic, and medical requirements needed to keep prisoners alive and able to perform hard labor when the threat of punishment takes the place of all other normal incentives, and the influence on performance if no time is allowed for anything but hard labor and if the prisoners are separated from their families.

In this paper, which, considering the complexity of the problem with which it is dealing, is comparatively short, an effort will be made to deal adequately with at least one aspect of it, namely, with *the concentration camp as a means of producing changes in the prisoners which will make them more useful subjects* of the Nazi state. . . .

If we thus assume that what happens in the camp has, among others, the purpose of changing the prisoners into useful subjects of the Nazi state, and if this purpose is attained by means of exposing them to extreme situations, then a legitimate way to carry on our investigation is by an historical account of what occurred in the prisoners from the moment they had their first experience with the Gestapo up to the time when the process of adaptation to the camp situation was practically concluded. In analyzing this development different stages can be recognized, which will furnish us with appropriate subdivisions. The first of these stages centers around *the initial shock of finding oneself unlawfully imprisoned.* The main event of the second stage is *transportation into the camp and the first experiences in it.* The next stage is characterized by a slow process of changing the prisoner's life and personality.

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[1] For an official report on life in these camps see: *Papers concerning the treatment of German nationals in Germany.* London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1939.

[2] The daily food the prisoners received yielded approximately 1800 calories, whereas for the labor they were forced to perform the average caloric requirement is from 3000 to 3300 calories.

[3] Surgical operations, for instance, were performed by a former printer. There were many M.D.'s in the camp, but no prisoner was permitted to work in the camp in his civilian capacity because that would not have implied a punishment.

[4] The concentration camps for political prisoners are administered by the "Elite" formations of the "SS" groups, called "Deathhead" regiments. Every member of these regiments has to spend at least three months of his training as a guard in these camps. If he does not perform satisfactorily in this capacity, he is transferred back to the non-elite formations of the "SS."

There are many types of concentration camps in Germany. If the author speaks of concentration camps, the meaning is always camps for political prisoners. Up to the time of the war there was three big camps of this type and a few smaller ones, all for men, and one small camp for women. Up to that time the total of prisoners in these camps never exceeded 60,000. Contrary to widespread opinion, only a small minority of them were Jews.

The many other German concentration camps, such as those for forced labor, were not administered by the Gestapo, and the conditions in them were very different.

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It occurs step by step, continuously. It is *the adaptation to the camp situation.* During this process it is difficult to recognize the impact of what is going on. One way to make it more obvious is to compare two groups of prisoners, one in whom the process has only started, namely, the "new" prisoners, with another one in whom the process is already far advanced. This other group will consist of the "old" prisoners. The final stage is reached when *the prisoner has adapted himself to the life in the camp.* This last stage seems to be characterized, among other features, by a definitely changed attitude to, and evaluation of, the Gestapo.

Why the Material Was Collected

Before discussing these different stages of a prisoner's development a few remarks on *why and how the material* presented in this paper *was collected* seems advisable. At this moment it seems easy to say why it was collected, because it is of sociological and psychological interest and contains observations which, to the author's knowledge, have rarely been published in scientific fashion. To accept this as an answer for the "why" would constitute a flagrant example of *logification post eventum.* The former training of the writer and his psychological interests were helpful in collecting the material and in conducting the investigation; but he did not study his behavior, and that of his fellow prisoners, in order to add to pure scientific research. The study of these behaviors was a mechanism developed by him *ad hoc* in order that he might have at least some intellectual interests and in this way be better equipped to endure life in the camp. His observing and collecting of data should rather be considered as a particular type of defense developed in such an extreme situation. It was individually developed, not enforced by the Gestapo, and based on this particular prisoner's background, training, and interests. It was developed to protect this individual against a disintegration of his personality. It is, therefore, a characteristic example of a private behavior. These private behaviors seem always to follow the path of least resistance; that is, they follow the individual's former life interests closely.

Since it is the only example of a *private behavior* presented in this paper, a few words on why and how it was developed may be of interest. The writer had studied and was familiar with the pathological picture presented by certain types of abnormal behavior. During the first days in prison, and particularly during the first days in the camp, he realized that he behaved differently from the way he used to. At first he rationalized that these changes in behavior were only surface phenomena, the logical result of his peculiar situation. But soon he realized that what happened to him, for instance, the split in his person into one who observes and one to whom things happen, could no longer be called normal, but was a typical psychopathological phenomenon. So he asked himself, "Am I going insane, or am I already insane?" To find an answer to this urgent question was obviously of prime importance. Moreover, he saw his fellow prisoners act in a most peculiar way, although he had every reason to assume that they, too, had been normal persons before being imprisoned. Now they suddenly appeared to be pathological liars, to be unable to restrain themselves, to be unable to make objective evaluations, etc. So another question arose, namely, "How can I protect myself against becoming as they are?" The answer to both questions was comparatively simple: to find out what had happened in them, and to me. If I did not change any more than all other normal persons, then what happened in me and to me was a process of adaptation and not the setting in of insanity. So I set out to find what changes had occurred and were occurring in the prisoners. By doing so I suddenly realized that I had found a solution to my second problem: by occupying myself during my spare time with interesting problems, with interviewing my fellow prisoners, by pondering my findings for the hours without end during which I was forced to perform exhausting labor which did not ask for any mental concentration, I succeeded in killing the time in a way which seemed constructive. To forget for a time that I was in the camp seemed at first the greatest advantage of this occupation. As time went on, the enhancement of my self-respect due to my ability to continue to do meaningful work despite the contrary efforts of the Gestapo became even more important than the pastime. . . .

The Initial Shock

In presentation, the initial psychological shock of being deprived of one's civil rights and unlawfully locked into a prison may be separated from the shock of the first deliberate and extravagant acts of torture to which the prisoners were exposed. These two shocks may be analyzed separately because the author, like most of the prisoners, spent several days in prison without being exposed to physical torture before being transported into the camp. This transportation into the camp, and the "initiation" into it, is often the first torture which the prisoner has ever experienced and is, as a rule, physically and psychologically the worst torture to which he will ever be exposed. This initial torture, incidentally, is called by the Gestapo the prisoner's "welcome" to the camp.

The prisoners' reactions on being brought into prison can best be analyzed on the basis of two categories: the socio-economic class to which they belonged and their political education. These categories are obviously overlappings and can be separated only for the purposes of presentation. Another factor of importance in respect to the prisoners' reactions to finding themselves in prison was whether they had been previously acquainted with prisons, due either to criminality or to political activities.

Those prisoners who had previously spent time in prisons, or who expected to be imprisoned due to political activities, resented their fate, but somehow accepted it as something which happened in accordance with their expectations. It may be assumed that the initial shock of finding oneself imprisoned expressed itself—if at all—in a change in self-esteem. But it might be said that the self-

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esteem of the former criminals, as well as that of the politically educated prisoners, was rather heightened by the circumstances under which they found themselves in prison. They were, as a matter of fact, full of anxieties as to their future, and as to what might happen to their families and friends. But, despite this justified anxiety, they did not feel too badly about the fact of imprisonment itself.

Persons who had formerly spent time in prison as *criminals* showed their glee openly at finding themselves on equal terms with political and business leaders, with attorneys and judges, some of whom had been instrumental earlier in sending them to prison. This spite, and the feeling of being equal to these men who up to now had been their superiors, helped their egos considerably.

The *politically educated prisoners* found support for their self-esteem in the fact that the Gestapo had singled them out as important enough to take revenge on. The members of different parties relied on different types of rationalizations for this building-up of their egos. Former members of radical-leftist groups, for example, found in the fact of their imprisonment a demonstration of how dangerous for the Nazis their former activities had been.

Of the main socio-economic classes, the lower classes were almost wholly represented either by former criminals or by politically educated prisoners. Any estimation of what might have been the reaction of noncriminal and nonpolitical members of the lower classes must remain conjecture and guesswork.

The great majority of the *nonpolitical middle-class prisoners*, who were a small minority among the prisoners of the concentration camps, were least able to withstand the initial shock. They found themselves utterly unable to comprehend what had happened to them. They seemed more than ever to cling to what up to now had given them self-esteem. Again and again they assured the members of the Gestapo that they never opposed Naziism. In their behavior became apparent the dilemma of the politically uneducated German middle classes when confronted with the phenomenon of National socialism. They had no consistent philosophy which would protect their integrity as human beings, which would give them the force to make a stand against the Nazis. They had obeyed the law handed down by the ruling classes, without ever questioning its wisdom. And now this law, or at least the law-enforcing agencies, turned against them, who always had been its staunchest supporters. Even now they did not dare to oppose the ruling group, although such opposition might have provided them with self-respect. They could not question the wisdom of law and of the police, so they accepted the behavior of the Gestapo as just. What was wrong was that *they* were made objects of a persecution which in itself *must* be right, since it was carried out by the authorities. The only way out of this particular dilemma was to be convinced that it must be a "mistake." These prisoners continued to behave in this way despite the fact that the Gestapo, as well as most of their fellow prisoners, derided them for it.

Although the guards used them for their own self-aggrandizement, they were not free from anxieties when doing so. They realized that they, too, belonged to the same socio-economic stratum of society.[5] The insistence on legality of the official German internal policy may find its explanation in an effort to dissolve the anxieties of the middle-class followers who feel that illegal acts destroy the foundation of their existence. The height of this farce of legality was reached when prisoners in the camp had to sign a document stating that they agreed to their imprisonment and that they were well pleased with the way they had been treated. It did not seem farcical to the Gestapo, which put great emphasis on such documents as a demonstration that everything happened according to law and order. Gestapo members were, for instance, permitted to kill prisoners, but not to steal from them; instead they forced prisoners to sell their possessions, and then to make a "gift" of the money they received to some Gestapo formation.

The great desire of the middle-class prisoners was that their status as such should be respected in some way. What they resented most was to be treated "like ordinary criminals." After some time they could not help realizing their actual situation. Then they seemed to disintegrate. The several suicides which happened in prison and during the transportation into camp were practically confined to members of this group. Later on, members of this group were the ones who behaved in the most antisocial way; they cheated their fellow prisoners, a few turned spies in the service of the Gestapo. They lost their middle-class characteristics, their sense of propriety, and their self-respect; they became shiftless and seemed to disintegrate as autonomous persons. They no longer seemed able to form a life-pattern of their own, but followed the patterns developed by other groups of prisoners.

Members of *the upper class* segregated themselves as much as possible. They, too, seemed unable to accept as real what was happening to them. They expressed their conviction that they would be released within the shortest time because of their importance. This conviction was absent among the middle-class prisoners, who harbored the identical hope for a near release, not as individuals, but as a group. The upper-class prisoners never formed a group, they remained more or less isolated, each of them with a group of middle-class "clients." Their superior position could be upheld by the amount of money they could distribute, and by a hope on the part of their "clients" that they might help them once they had been released. This hope was steadily kindled by the fact that many of the upper-class prisoners really were released from prison, or camp, within a comparatively short time.

A few upper-upper-class prisoners remained aloof even from the upper-class behavior. They did not collect "clients," they did not use their money for bribing other prisoners, they did not express any hopes about their release. The number of these prisoners was too small to permit any generalizations.[6] It seemed that they looked down on all other prisoners nearly as much as they de-

[5] Most soldiers and noncommissioned officers of the "SS" were very young, between 17 and 20 years old, and the sons of farmers, of small shopkeepers, or of the lower class of the civil servants.

[6] The author met actually only three of them, a Bavarian prince, member of the former royal family, and two Austrian dukes, closely related to the former emperor. It is doubtful whether there were at any time more than three of these prisoners in the camps.

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spised the Gestapo. In order to endure life in the camp they seemed to develop such a feeling of superiority that nothing could touch them.

As far as the political prisoners are concerned, another psychological mechanism became apparent at a later time, which might already have played some part in the initial development and which, therefore, ought to be mentioned. It seems that many political leaders had some guilt-feeling that they had fallen down on their job, particularly the job of preventing the rise of Nazi power either by fighting the Nazis more effectively or by establishing such watertight democratic, or leftist class rule that the Nazis would not have been able to overcome it. It seems that this guilt-feeling was relieved to a considerable degree by the fact that the Nazis found them important enough to bother with them.

It might be that so many prisoners managed comparatively well to endure living under the conditions imposed on them in the camp because the punishment which they had to endure freed them from much of their guilt-feeling. Indications of such a process may be found in the frequent remarks with which prisoners responded when reprimanded for any kind of undesirable behavior. When reprimanded, for instance, for cursing or fighting, or for being unclean, they would nearly always answer: "We cannot behave normally to one another when living under such circumstances." When admonished not to speak too harshly of their friends and relatives who were free, whom they accused of not taking care of their affairs, they would answer: "This is no place to be objective. When once I am again at liberty, I shall again act in a civilized way, and evaluate the behavior of others objectively." . . .

The Transportation into the Camp and the First Experience in It

After having spent several days in prison, the prisoners were brought into the camp. During this transportation they were exposed to constant tortures of various kinds. Many of them depended on the fantasy of the particular Gestapo member in charge of a group of prisoners. Still, a certain pattern soon became apparent. Corporal punishment, consisting of whipping, kicking, slapping, intermingled with shooting and wounding with the bayonet, alternated with tortures the obvious goal of which was extreme exhaustion. For instance, the prisoners were forced to stare for hours into glaring lights, to kneel for hours, and so on. From time to time a prisoner got killed; no prisoner was permitted to take care of his or another's wounds. These tortures alternated with efforts on the part of the guards to force the prisoners to hit one another, and to defile what the guards considered the prisoners most cherished values. For instance, the prisoners were forced to curse their God, to accuse themselves of vile actions, accuse their wives of adultery and of prostitution. This continued for hours and was repeated at various times. According to reliable reports, this kind of initiation never took less than 12 hours and frequently lasted 24 hours. If the number of prisoners brought into the camp was too large, or if they came from nearby places, the ceremony took place during the first day in camp.

The purpose of the tortures was to break the resistance of the prisoners, and to asure the guard that they were really superior to them. This can be seen from the fact that the longer the tortures lasted, the less violent they became. The guards became slowly less excited, and at the end even talked with the prisoners. As soon as a new guard took over, he started with new acts of terror, although not as violent as in the beginning, and he eased up sooner than his predecessor. Sometimes prisoners who had already spent time in camp were brought back with a group of new prisoners. These old prisoners were not tortured if they could furnish evidence that they had already been in the camp. That these tortures were planned can be seen from the fact that during the author's transportation into the camp after several prisoners had died and many had been wounded in tortures lasting for 12 hours, the command, "Stop mistreating the prisoners," came and from this moment on the prisoners were left in peace till they arrived in the camp when another group of guards took over and started anew to take advantage of them.

It is difficult to ascertain what happened in the minds of the prisoners during the time they were exposed to this treatment. Most of them became so exhausted they were only partly conscious of what happened. In general, prisoners remembered the details and did not mind talking about them, but they did not like to talk about what they had felt and thought during the time of torture. The few who volunteered information made vague statements which sounded like devious rationalizations, invented for the purpose of justifying that they had endured treatment injurious to their self-respect without trying to fight back. The few who had tried to fight back could not be interviewed; they were dead.

The writer can vividly recall his extreme weariness, resulting from a bayonet wound he had received early in the course of transportation and from a heavy blow on the head. Both injuries led to the loss of a considerable amount of blood, and made him groggy. He recalls vividly, nevertheless, his thoughts and emotions during the transportation. He wondered all the time that man can endure so much without committing suicide or going insane. He wondered that the guards really tortured prisoners in the way it had been described in books on the concentration camps; that the Gestapo was so simple-minded as either to enjoy forcing prisoners to defile themselves or to expect to break their resistance in this way. He wondered that the guards were lacking in fantasy when selecting the means to torture the prisoners; that their sadism was without imagination. He was rather amused by the repeated statement that guards do not shoot the prisoners but kill them by beating them to death because a bullet costs six pfennigs, and the prisoners are not worth even so much. Obviously the idea that these men, most of them formerly influential persons, were not worth such a trifle impressed the guards considerably. On the basis of this introspection it seems that the writer gained emotional strength from the following facts: that things happened according to expectation; that, therefore, his future in the camp was at least partly predictable from what he already was experiencing and from what he had read; and

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that the Gestapo was more stupid than he had expected, which eventually provided small satisfaction. Moreover, he felt pleased with himself that the tortures did not change his ability to think or his general point of view. In retrospect these considerations seem futile, but they ought to be mentioned because, if the author should be asked to sum up in one sentence what, all during the time he spent in the camp, was his main problem, he would say: *to safeguard his ego in such a way, if by any good luck he should regain liberty, he would be approximately the same person he was when deprived of liberty.*

He has no doubt that he was able to endure the transportation, and all that followed, because right from the beginning he became convinced that these horrible and degrading experiences somehow did not happen to "him" as a subject, but only to "him" as an object. The importance of this attitude was corroborated by many statements of other prisoners, although none would go so far as to state definitely that an attitude of this type was clearly developed already during the time of the transportation. They couched their feelings usually in more general terms such as, "The main problem is to remain alive and unchanged," without specifying what they meant as unchanged. From additional remarks it became apparent that what should remain unchanged was individually different and roughly covered the person's general attitudes and values.

All the thoughts and emotions which the author had during the transportation were extremely detached. It was as if he watched things happening in which he only vaguely participated. Later he learned that many prisoners had developed this same feeling of detachment, as if what happened really did not matter to oneself. It was strangely mixed with a conviction that "this cannot be true, such things just do not happen." Not only during the transportation but all through the time spent in camp, the prisoners had to convince themselves that this was real, was really happening, and not just a nightmare. They were never wholly successful.[7]

This feeling of detachment which rejected the reality of the situation in which the prisoners found themselves might be considered a mechanism safeguarding the integrity of their personalities. Many prisoners behaved in the camp as if their life there would have no connection with their "real" life; they went so far as to insist that this was the right attitude. Their statements about themselves, and their evaluation of their own and other persons' behavior, differed considerably from what they would have said and thought outside of camp. This separation of behavior patterns and schemes of values inside and outside of camp was so strong that it could hardly be touched in conversation; it was one of the many "taboos" not to be discussed. The prisoners' feelings could be summed up by the following sentence: "What I am doing here, or what is happening to me, does not count at all; here everything is permissible as long and insofar as it contributes to helping me to survive in the camp."

One more observation made during the transportation ought to be mentioned. No prisoner fainted. To faint meant to get killed. In this particular situation fainting was no device protecting a person against intolerable pain and in this way facilitating his life; it endangered a prisoner's existence because anyone unable to follow orders was killed. Once the prisoners were in the camp the situation changed and a prisoner who fainted sometimes received some attention or was usually no longer tortured. The result of this changed attitude of the guards was that prisoners who did not faint under the more severe strains during the transportation, in the camp usually fainted when exposed to great hardships, although they were not as great as those endured during the transportation. . . .

The Adaptation to the Camp Situation

It seems that camp experiences which remained within the normal frame of reference of a prisoner's life experience were dealt with by means of the normal psychological mechanisms. Once the experience transcended this frame of reference, the normal mechanisms seemed no longer able to deal adequately with it and new psychological mechanisms were needed. The experience during the transportation was one of those transcending the normal frame of reference and the reaction to it may be described as "unforgetable, but unreal."

The prisoners' dreams were an indication that the extreme experiences were not dealt with by the usual mechanisms. Many dreams expressed aggression against Gestapo members, usually combined with wish fulfillment in such a way that the prisoner was taking his revenge on them. Interestingly enough, the reason he took revenge on them —if a particular reason could be ascertained—was always for some comparatively small mistreatment, never an extreme experience. The author had had some previous experience concerning his reaction to shocks in dreams. He expected that his dreams after the transportation would follow the pattern of repetition of the shock in dreams, the shock becoming less vivid and the dream finally disappearing. He was astonished to find that in his dreams the most shocking events did not appear. He asked many prisoners whether they dreamed about the transportation and he was unable to find a single one who could remember having dreamed about it.

Attitudes similar to those developed toward the transportation could be observed in other extreme situations. On a terribly cold winter night when a snow storm was blowing, all prisoners were punished by being forced to stand at attention without overcoats—they never wore any —for hours.[8] This, after having worked for more than

[7] There were good indications that most guards embraced a similar attitude, although for different reasons. They tortured the prisoners partly because they enjoyed demonstrating their superiority, partly because their superiors expected it of them. But, having been educated in a world which rejected brutality, they felt uneasy about what they were doing. It seems that they, too, had an emotional attitude toward their acts of brutality which might be described as a feeling of unreality. After having been guards in the camp for some time, they got accustomed to inhuman behavior, they became "conditioned" to it; it then became part of their "real" life.

[8] The reason for this punishment was that two prisoners had tried to escape. On such occasions all prisoners were always punished very severely, so that in the future they would give away secrets they had learned, because otherwise they would have to suffer. The idea was that every prisoner ought to feel responsible for any act committed by any other prisoner. This was in line with the principle of the Gestapo to force the prisoners to feel and act as a group, and not as individuals.

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12 hours in the open, and having received hardly any food. They were threatened with having to stand all through the night. After about 20 prisoners had died from exposure the disclipine broke down. The threats of the guards became ineffective. To be exposed to the weather was a terrible torture; to see one's friends die without being able to help, and to stand a good chance of dying, created a situation similar to the transportation, except that the prisoners had by now more experience with the Gestapo. Open resistance was impossible, as impossible as it was to do anything definite to safeguard oneself. A feeling of utter indifference swept the prisoners. They did not care whether the guards shot them; they were indifferent to acts of torture committed by the guards. The guards had no longer any authority, the spell of fear and death was broken. It was again as if what happened did not "really" happen to oneself. There was again the split between the "me" to whom it happened, and the "me" who really did not care and was just an interested but detached observer. Unfortunate as the situation was, they felt free from fear and therefore were actually happier than at most other times during their camp experiences.

Whereas the extremeness of the situation probably produced the split mentioned above, a number of circumstances concurred to create the feeling of happiness in the prisoners. Obviously it was easier to withstand unpleasant experiences when all found themselves in "the same boat." Moreover, since everybody was convinced that his chances to survive were slim, each felt more heroic and willing to help others than he would feel at other moments when helping others might endanger him. This helping and being helped raised the spirits. Another factor was that they were not only free of the fear of the Gestapo, but the Gestapo had actually lost its power, since the guards seemed reluctant to shoot all prisoners. After more than 80 prisoners had died, and several hundred had their extremities so badly frozen that they had later to be amputated, the prisoners were permitted to return to the barracks. They were completely exhausted, but did not experience that feeling of happiness which some of them had expected. They felt relieved that the torture was over, but felt at the same time that they no longer were free from fear and no longer could strongly rely on mutual help. Each prisoner as an individual was now comparatively safer, but he had lost the safety originating in being a member of a unified group. This event was again freely discussed, in a detached way, and again the discussion was restricted to facts; the prisoners' emotions and thoughts during this night were hardly ever mentioned. The event itself and its details were not forgotten, but no particular emotions were attached to them; nor did they appear in dreams.

The psychological reactions to events which were somewhat more within the sphere of the normally comprehensible were decidedly different from those to extreme events. It seems that prisoners dealt with less extreme events in the same way as if they had happened outside of the camp. For example, if a prisoner's punishment was not of an unusual kind, he seemed ashamed of it, he tried not to speak about it. A slap in one's face was embarrassing, and not to be discussed. One hated individual guards who had kicked one, or slapped one, or verbally abused one much more than the guard who really had wounded one seriously. In the latter case one eventually hated the Gestapo as such, but not so much the individual inflicting the punishment. Obviously this differentiation was unreasonable, but it seemed to be inescapable. One felt deeper and more violent aggressions against particular Gestapo members who had committed minor vile acts than one felt against those who had acted in a much more terrible fashion.

The following tentative interpretation of this strange phenomenon should be accepted with caution. It seems that all experiences which might have happened during the prisoner's "normal" life history provoked a "normal" reaction. Prisoners seemed, for instance, particularly sensitive to punishments similar to those which a parent might inflict on his child. To punish a child was within their "normal" frame of reference, but that they should become the object of the punishment destroyed their adult frame of reference. So they reacted to it not in an adult, but in a childish way—with embarrassment and shame, with violent, impotent, and unmanageable emotions directed, not against the system, but against the person inflicting the punishment. A contributing factor might have been that the greater the punishment, the more could one expect to receive friendly support which exerted a soothing influence. Moreover, if the suffering was great, one felt more or less like a martyr, suffering for a cause, and the martyr is supposed not to resent his martyrdom.

This, incidentally, raises the question as to which psychological phenomena make it possible to submit to martyrdom and which are those leading others to accept it as such. This problem transcends the frame of this presentation, but some observations pertinent to it may be mentioned. Prisoners who died under tortures *qua* prisoners, although martyrs to their political conviction, were not considered martyrs. Those who suffered due to efforts to protect others were accepted as martyrs. The Gestapo was usually successful in preventing the creation of martyrs, due either to insight into the psychological mechanisms involved or to its anti-individualistic ideology. If a prisoner tried to protect a group, he might have been killed by a guard, but if his action came to the knowledge of the camp administration then the whole group was always more severely punished than it would have been in the first place. In this way the group came to resent the actions of its protector because it suffered under them. *The protector was thus prevented from becoming a leader, or a martyr, around whom group resistance might have been formed. . . .*

Differences in the Psychological Attitudes of Old and New Prisoners

In the following discussion we refer by the term "new prisoners" to those who had not spent more than one year in the camp; "old" prisoners are those who have spent at least three years in the camp. As far as the old prisoners are concerned the author can offer only observations but no findings based on introspection.

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It has been mentioned that the main concern of the new prisoners seemed to be to remain intact as a personality and to return to the outer world the same persons who had left it; all their emotional efforts were directed towards this goal. Old prisoners seemed mainly concerned with the problem of how to live as well as possible within the camp. Once they had reached this attitude, everything that happened to them, even the worst atrocity, was "real" to them. No longer was there a split between one to whom things happened and the one who observed them. Once this stage was reached of taking everything that happened in the camp as "real," there was every indication that the prisoners who had reached it were afraid of returning to the outer world. They did not admit it directly, but from their talk it was clear that they hardly believed they would ever return to this outer world because they felt that only a cataclysmic event—a world war and world revolution—could free them; and even then they doubted that they would be able to adapt to this new life. They seemed aware of what had happened to them while growing older in the camp. They realized that they had adapted themselves to the life in the camp and that this process was coexistent with a basic change in their personality.

The most drastic demonstration of this realization was provided by the case of a formerly very prominent radical German politician. He declared that according to his experience nobody could live in the camp longer than five years without changing his attitudes so radically that he no longer could be considered the same person he used to be. He asserted that he did not see any point in continuing to live once his real life consisted in being a prisoner in a concentration camp, that he could not endure developing those attitudes and behaviors he saw developing in all old prisoners. He therefore had decided to commit suicide on the sixth anniversary of his being brought into the camp. His fellow prisoners tried to watch him carefully on this day, but nevertheless he succeeded.

There was, of course, considerable variation among individuals in the time it took them to make their peace with the idea of having to spend the rest of their lives in the camp. Some became part of the camp life rather soon, some probably never. When a new prisoner was brought into the camp, the older ones tried to teach him a few things which might prove helpful in his adjustment. The new prisoners were told that they should try by all means to survive the first days and not to give up the fight for their lives, that it would become easier the longer time they spent in camp. They said, "If you survive the first three months you will survive the next three years." This, despite the fact that the yearly mortality was close to 20 per cent. This high death rate was mostly due to the large number of new prisoners who did not survive the first few weeks in the camp, either because they did not care to survive by means of adapting themselves to the life in camp or because they were unable to do so. How long it took a prisoner to cease to consider life outside the camp as real depended to a great extent on the strength of his emotional ties to his family and friends. The change to accepting camp life as real never took place before spending two years in camp. Even then everyone was overtly longing to regain freedom. Some of the indications from which one could learn about the changed attitude were: scheming to find oneself a better place in the camp rather than trying to contact the outer world,[9] avoiding speculation about one's family, or world affairs,[10] concentrating all interest on events taking place inside of the camp. When the author expressed to some of the old prisoners his astonishment that they seemed not to be interested in discussing their future life outside the camp, they frequently admitted that they no longer could visualize themselves living outside the camp, making free decisions, taking care of themselves and their families. The changes in attitudes toward their families and to events taking place in the outside world were not the only ones which could be observed in old prisoners; other differences between old and new prisoners could be recognized in their hopes for their future lives, in the degree to which they regressed to infantile behavior, and in many other ways. When discussing these differences between old and new prisoners it should be borne in mind that there were great individual variations, that all statements are only approximations and generalizations, and that the categories are interrelated.

Changes in Attitudes toward One's Family and Friends

The new prisoners were usually those who received most letters, money, and other signs of attention. Their families were trying everything to free them. Neverthless they consistently accused them of not doing enough, of betraying and cheating them. They would weep over a letter telling of the efforts to liberate them, but curse in the next moment when learning that some of their property had been sold without their permission. They would swear at their families which "obviously" considered them "already dead." Even the smallest change in their former private world attained tremendous importance. They might have forgotten the names of some of their best friends, but once they learned that the friends had moved they were terribly upset and nothing could console them. This ambivalence of the new prisoners in relation to their families seemed to be due to a mechanism which was mentioned before. Their desire to return exactly the person who had left was so great that they feared any change, however trifling, in the situation they had left. Their worldly possessions should be secure and untouched, although they were of no use to them at this moment.

It is difficult to say whether the desire that everything remain unchanged was due to their realization of how

[9] New prisoners would spend all their money on efforts to smuggle letters out of the camp or to receive communications without having them censored. Old prisoners did not use their money for such purposes. They used it for securing for themselves "soft" jobs, such as clerical in the offices of the camp or work in the shops where they were at least protected against the weather while at work.

[10] It so happened that on the same day news was received of a speech by President Roosevelt, denouncing Hitler and Germany, and rumors spread that one officer of the Gestapo would be replaced by another. The *new* prisoners discussed the speech excitedly, and paid no attention to the rumors, the *old* prisoners paid no attention to the speech, but devoted all their conversations to the changes in camp officers.

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difficult it might be to adjust to an entirely changed home situation or whether it finds its explanation in some sort of magical thinking running approximately along the following lines: If nothing changes in the world in which I used to live, then I shall not change, either. In this way they might have tried to counteract their feeling that they were changing. The violent reaction against changes in their families was then the counterpart of the realization that they were changing. What enraged them was probably not only the fact of the change, but the change in standing within the family which it implied. Their families had been dependent on them for decisions, and now they were the ones to be dependent. That created in them a feeling of dependency. The only chance they saw for becoming again the head of the family was that the family structure remain untouched despite their absence. Also they knew the attitudes of most persons toward those who have spent time in prisons of any kind.

As a matter of fact, although most families behaved decently to those family members who were in the camp, serious problems were created. During the first months they spent a great deal of money in efforts to free the prisoner, quite often more than they could afford. When pleading with Gestapo members to set their relatives free —an unpleasant task at best—they were repeatedly told that it was the prisoner's own fault that he was imprisoned. Later on, they found difficulties in finding employment because a family member was suspect; their children had difficulties at school; they were excluded from public relief. So it was only natural that they came to resent having a family member in the camp. Their friends did not have much compassion for them, because the German population at large developed certain defense mechanisms against the concentration camp. The Germans could not stand the idea of living in a world where one was not protected by law and order. They just would not believe that the prisoners in the camps had not committed outrageous crimes since the way they were punished permitted only this conclusion. So actually a slow process of alienation took place between the prisoners and their families, but as far as the new prisoners were concerned this process was only beginning. The question arises as to how they could blame their families for changes which actually occurred in them, and whose cause they were. It might be that the prisoners took so much punishment, had to endure such hardships, that they could not accept any blame. They felt that they had atoned for any past shortcomings in their relations to their families and friends, and for any changes which might occur in them; in this way they were free from accepting any responsibility in this respect, and free from any guilt-feelings; and so they felt freer to hate other people, even their own families, for their defects.

This feeling of having atoned for all guilt had some real foundation. When the concentration camps were first established the Nazis detained in them their more prominent foes.[11] Pretty soon there were no more prominent enemies available, because they were either dead, in the jails, the camps, or had emigrated. Still, an institution was needed to threaten the opponents of the system. Too many Germans became dissatisfied with the system. To imprison all of them would have interrupted the functioning of the industrial production, the upholding of which was a paramount goal of the Nazis. So if a group of the population got fed up with the Nazi regime, a selected few members of this group would be brought into the concentration camp. If lawyers became restless, a few hundred lawyers were sent to the camp, the same happened to physicians when the medical profession seemed rebellious, etc. The Gestapo called such group punishments "actions" and this new system was first used during the year 1937-38, when Germany was first preparing to embark on the annexation of foreign countries. During the first of these "actions" only the leaders of the opposition group were punished. That led to the feeling that just to belong to a rebellious group was not dangerous, since only the leaders were threatened. Soon the Gestapo revised its system and selected the persons to be punished so that they represented a cross-section through the different strata of the group. This new procedure had not only the advantage of spreading terror among all members of the group, but made it possible to punish and destroy the group without necessarily touching the leader if that was for some reason inopportune.[12] . . .

Old prisoners did not like to be reminded of their families and former friends. When they spoke about them, it was in a very detached way. They liked to receive letters, but it was not very important to them, partly because they had lost contact with the events related in them. It has been mentioned that they had some realization of how difficult it might be for them to find their way back, but there was another contributing factor, namely, the prisoners' hatred of all those living outside of the camp, who "enjoyed life as if we were not rotting away."

This outside world which continued to live as if nothing had happened was in the minds of the prisoners represented by those whom they used to know, namely, by their relatives and friends. But even this hatred was very subdued in the old prisoners. It seemed that, as much as they had forgotten to love their kin, they had lost the ability to hate them. *They had learned to direct a great amount of aggression against themselves so as not to get into too many conflicts with the Gestapo, while the new prisoners still directed their aggressions against the outer world, and—when not supervised—against the Gestapo.* Since the old prisoners did not show much emotion either way, they were unable to feel strongly about anybody.

Old prisoners did not like to mention their former social status or their former activities, whereas new prisoners were rather boastful about them. New prisoners seemed to try to back their self-esteem by letting others know how important they had been, with the very obvious implication that they still were important. Old prisoners seemed

[11] The concentration camp, being an integral part of the Nazi system, has an interesting history, reflecting the changes which this system underwent. The author hopes sometime to be able to present the camp in its historical development. This paper is based on the conditions which could be observed during the year 1938-39.

[12] At one time a movement opposed to the Nazis' regimentation of cultural activities centered around the person of a famous conductor, who, in general, was favorably inclined towards Naziism. He was never punished, but the group was destroyed by the imprisonment of a cross-section of it. So he found himself a leader without followers and the movement subsided.

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to have accepted their state of dejection, and to compare it with with their former splendor—and anything was magnificent when compared with the situation in which they found themselves—was probably too depressing. . . .

Regression Into Infantile Behavior

The prisoners developed types of behavior which are characteristic of infancy or early youth. Some of these behaviors developed slowly, others were immediately imposed on the prisoners and developed only in intensity as time went on. Some of these more or less infantile behaviors have already been discussed, such as ambivalence to one's family, despondency, finding satisfaction in daydreaming rather than in action.

Whether some of these behavior patterns were deliberately produced by the Gestapo is hard to ascertain. Others were definitely produced by it, but again we do not know whether it was consciously done. It has been mentioned that even during the transportation the prisoners were tortured in a way in which a cruel and domineering father might torture a helpless child; here it should be added that the prisoners were also debased by techniques which went much further into childhood situations. They were forced to soil themselves. In the camp the defecation was strictly regulated; it was one of the most important daily events, discussed in great detail. During the day the prisoners who wanted to defecate had to obtain the permission of the guard. It seemed as if the education to cleanliness would be once more repeated. It seemed to give pleasure to the guards to hold the power of granting or withholding the permission to visit the latrines. (Toilets were mostly not available). This pleasure of the guards found its counterpart in the pleasure the prisoners derived from visiting the latrines, because there they usually could rest for a moment, secure from the whips of the overseers and guards. They were not always so secure, because sometimes enterprising young guards enjoyed interfering with the prisoners even at these moments.

The prisoners were forced to say "thou" to one another, which in Germany is indiscriminately used only among small children. They were not permitted to address one another with the many titles to which middle- and upper-class Germans are accustomed. On the other hand, they had to address the guards in the most deferential manner, giving them all their titles.

The prisoners lived, like children, only in the immediate present; they lost the feeling for the sequence of time, they became unable to plan for the future or to give up immediate pleasure satisfactions to gain greater ones in the near future. They were unable to establish durable object-relations. Friendships developed as quickly as they broke up. Prisoners would, like early adolescents, fight one another tooth and nail, declare that they would never even look at one another or speak to one another, only to become close friends within a few minutes. They were boastful, telling tales about what they had accomplished in their former lives, or how they succeeded in cheating foremen or guards, and how they sabotaged the work. Like children they felt not at all set back or ashamed when it became known that they had lied about their prowess.

Another factor contributing to the regression into childhood behavior was the work the prisoners were forced to perform. New prisoners particularly were forced to perform nonsensical tasks, such as carrying heavy rocks from one place to another, and after a while back to the place where they had picked them up. On other days they were forced to dig holes in the ground with their bare hands, although tools were available. They resented such nonsensical work, although it ought to have been immaterial to them whether their work was useful. They felt debased when forced to perform "childish" and stupid labor, and preferred even harder work when it produced something that might be considered useful. There seems to be no doubt that the tasks they performed, as well as the mistreatment by the Gestapo which they had to endure, contributed to their disintegration as adult persons.

The Final Adjustment to the Life in the Camp

A prisoner had reached the final stage of adjustment to the camp situation when he had changed his personality so as to accept as his own the values of the Gestapo. A few examples may illustrate how this acceptance expressed itself. . . .

The prisoners found themselves in an impossible situation due to the steady interference with their privacy on the part of the guards and other prisoners. So a great amount of aggression accumulated. In the new prisoners it vented itself in the way it might have done in the world outside the camp. But slowly prisoners accepted, as expression of their verbal aggressions, terms which definitely did not originate in their previous vocabularies, but were taken over from the very different vocabularly of the Gestapo. From copying the verbal aggressions of the Gestapo to copying their form of bodily aggressions was one more step, but it took several years to make this step. It was not unusual to find old prisoners, when in charge of others, behaving worse than the Gestapo, in some cases because they were trying to win favor with the Gestapo in this way but more often because they considered this the best way to behave toward prisoners in the camp.

Practically all prisoners who had spent a long time in the camp took over the Gestapo's attitude toward the so-called unfit prisoners. Newcomers presented the old prisoners with difficult problems. Their complaints about the unbearable life in camp added new strain to the life in the barracks, so did their inability to adjust to it. Bad behavior in the labor gang endangered the whole group. So a newcomer who did not stand up well under the strain tended to become a liability for the other prisoners. Moreover, weaklings were those most apt eventually to turn traitors. Weaklings usually died during the first weeks in the camp anyway, so it seemed as well to get rid of them sooner. So old prisoners were sometimes instrumental in getting rid of the unfit, in this way making a feature of Gestapo ideology a feature of their own behavior. This was one of the many situations in which old prisoners demonstrated toughness and molded their way of treating other prisoners according to the example set by the Gestapo. That this was really a taking-over of Gestapo attitudes can be seen from the treatment of traitors.

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Self-protection asked for their elimination, but the way in which they were tortured for days and slowly killed was taken over from the Gestapo.

Old prisoners who seemed to have a tendency to identify themselves with the Gestapo did so not only in respect to aggressive behavior. They would try to arrogate to themselves old pieces of Gestapo uniforms. If that was not possible, they tried to sew and mend their uniforms so that they would resemble those of the guards. The length to which prisoners would go in these efforts seemed unbelievable, particularly since the Gestapo punished them for their efforts to copy Gestapo uniforms. When asked why they did it they admitted that they loved to look like one of the guards.

The identification with the Gestapo did not stop with the copying of their outer appearance and behavior. Old prisoners accepted their goals and values, too, even when they seemed opposed to their own interests. It was appalling to see how far formerly even politically well-educated prisoners would go in this identification. At one time American and English newspapers were full of stories about the cruelties committed in the camps. The Gestapo punished the prisoners for the appearance of these stories true to their policy of punishing the group for whatever a member or a former member did, and the stories must have originated in reports of former prisoners. In discussions of this event old prisoners would insist that it is not the business of foreign correspondents or newspapers to bother with German institutions and expressed their hatred of the journalists who tried to help them. The writer asked more than one hundred old political prisoners the following questions: "If I am lucky and reach foreign soil, should I tell the story of the camp and arouse the interest of the cultured world?" He found only two who made the unqualified statement that everyone escaping Germany ought to fight the Nazis to the best of his abilities. *All others were hoping for a German revolution, but did not like the idea of interference on the part of a foreign power.*

When old prisoners accepted Nazi values as their own they usually did not admit it, but explained their behavior by means of rationalizations. For instance, prisoners collected scrap in the camp because Germany was low on raw materials. When it was pointed out that they were thus helping the Nazis, they rationalized that through the saving of scrap Germany's working classes, too, became richer. When erecting buildings for the Gestapo, controversies started whether one should build well. New prisoners were for sabotaging, a majority of old prisoners for building well. They rationalized that the New Germany will have use for these buildings. When it was pointed out that a revolution will have to destroy the fortresses of the Gestapo, they retired to the general statement that one ought to do well any job one has to do. It seems that the majority of the old prisoners had realized that they could not continue to work for the Gestapo unless they could convince themselves that their work made some sense, so they had to convince themselves of this sense.

The satisfaction with which some old prisoners enjoyed the fact that, during the twice daily counting of the prisoners, they really had stood well at attention can be explained only by the fact that they had entirely accepted the values of the Gestapo as their own. Prisoners prided themselves of being as tough as the Gestapo members. This identification with their tortures went so far as copying their leisure-time activities. One of the games played by the guards was to find out who could stand to be hit longest without uttering a complaint. This game was copied by the old prisoners, as though they had not been hit often and long enough without needing to repeat this experience as a game.

Often the Gestapo would enforce nonsensical rules, originating in the whims of one of the guards. They were usually forgotten as soon as formulated, but there were always some old prisoners who would continue to follow these rules and try to enforce them on others long after the Gestapo had forgotten about them. Once, for instance, a guard on inspecting the prisoners' apparel found that the shoes of some of them were dirty on the inside. He ordered all prisoners to wash their shoes inside and out with water and soap. The heavy shoes treated this way became hard as stone. The order was never repeated, and many prisoners did not even execute it when given. Nevertheless there were some old prisoners who not only continued to wash the inside of their shoes every day but cursed all others who did not do so as negligent and dirty. These prisoners firmly believed that the rules set down by the Gestapo were desirable standards of human behavior, at least in the camp situation.

Other problems in which most old prisoners made their peace with the values of the Gestapo included the race problem, although race discrimination had been alien to their scheme of values before they were brought into the camp. They accepted as true the claim that Germany needed more space ("Lebensraum"), but added "as long as there does not exist a world federation," they believed in the superiority of the German race. It should be emphasized that this was not the result of propaganda on the side of the Gestapo. The Gestapo made no such efforts and insisted in its statements that it was not interested in how the prisoners felt as long as they were full of fear of the Gestapo. Moreover, the Gestapo insisted that it would prevent them from expressing their feelings anyway. The Gestapo seemed to think it impossible to win the prisoners for its values, after having made them subject to their tortures.

Among the old prisoners one could observe other developments which indicated their desire to accept the Gestapo along lines which definitely could not originate in propaganda. It seems that, since they returned to a childlike attitude toward the Gestapo, they had a desire that at least some of those whom they accepted as all-powerful father-images should be just and kind. They divided their positive and negative feelings — strange as it may be that they should have positive feelings, they had them—toward the Gestapo in such way that all positive emotions were concentrated on a few officers who were rather high up in the hierarchy of camp administrators, but hardly ever on the governor of the camp. They insisted that these officers hide behind their rough surfaces a feeling of justice and propriety; he, or they, were supposed to be genuinely interested in the prisoners and even

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trying, in a small way, to help them. Since nothing of these supposed feelings and efforts ever became apparent, it was explained that he hid them so effectively because otherwise he would not be able to help the prisoners. The eagerness of these prisoners to find reasons for their claims was pitiful. A whole legend was woven around the fact that of two officers inspecting a barrack one had cleaned his shoes from mud before entering. He probably did it automatically, but it was interpreted as a rebuff to the other officer and a clear demonstration of how he felt about the concentration camp.

After so much has been said about the old prisoners' tendency to conform and to identify with the Gestapo, it ought to be stressed that this was only part of the picture, because the author tried to concentrate on interesting psychological mechanisms in group behavior rather than on reporting types of behavior which are either well known or could reasonably be expected. These same old prisoners who identified with the Gestapo at other moments defied it, demonstrating extraordinary courage in doing so.

Summary

In conclusion it should be emphasized again that this essay is a preliminary report and does not pretend to be exhaustive. The author feels that the concentration camp has an importance reaching far beyond its being a place where the Gestapo takes revenge on its enemies. It is the main training ground for young Gestapo soldiers who are planning to rule and police Germany and all conquered nations; it is the Gestapo's laboratory where it develops methods for changing free and upright citizens not only into grumbling slaves, but into serfs who in many respects accept their masters' values. They still think that they are following their own life goals and values, whereas in reality they have accepted the Nazis' values as their own.

It seems that what happens in an extreme fashion to the prisoners who spend several years in the concentration camp happens in less exaggerated form to the inhabitants of the big concentration camp called greater Germany. It might happen to the inhabitants of occupied countries if they are not able to form organized groups of resistance. The system seems too strong for an individual to break its hold over his emotional life, particularly if he finds himself within a group which has more or less accepted the Nazi system. It seems easier to resist the pressure of the Gestapo and the Nazis if one functions as an individual; the Gestapo seems to know that and therefore insists on forcing all individuals into groups which they supervise. Some of the methods used for this purpose are the hostage system and the punishment of the whole group for whatever a member of it does; not permitting anybody to deviate in his behavior from the group norm, whatever this norm may be; discouraging solitary activities of any kind, etc. The main goal of the efforts seems to be to produce in the subjects childlike attitudes and childlike dependency on the will of the leaders. The most effective way to break this influence seems to be the formation of democratic groups of resistence of independent, mature, and self-reliant persons, in which every member backs up, in all other members, the ability to resist. If such groups are not formed it seems very difficult not to become subject to the slow process of personality disintegration produced by the unrelenting pressure of the Gestapo and the Nazi system.

Inasmuch as the concentration camp is the laboratory of the Gestapo for subjecting not only free men, but even the most ardent foes of the Nazi system, to the process of disintegration from their position as autonomous individuals, it ought to be studied by all persons interested in understanding what happens to a population subject to the methods of the Nazi system. It is hoped that by understanding what happens to the unhappy persons under Nazi domination it will be possible to devise methods by means of which they will be helped to resurrect within a short time as autonomous and self-reliant persons.

The Homosexual in Society

Something in James Agee's recent approach to the Negro pseudo-folk (*Partisan Review*, Spring 1944) is the background of the notes which I propose in discussing yet another group whose only salvation is in the struggle of all humanity for freedom and individual integrity; who have suffered in modern society persecution, excommunication; and whose "intellectuals", whose most articulate members, have been willing to desert that primary struggle, to beg, to gain at the price if need be of any sort of prostitution, privilege for themselves, however ephemeral; who have been willing rather than to struggle toward self-recognition, to sell their product, to convert their deepest feelings into marketable oddities and sentimentalities.

Although in private conversation, at every table, at every editorial board, one *knows* that a great body of modern art is cheated by what almost amounts to a homosexual cult; although hostile critics have opened fire in a constant attack as rabid as the attack of Southern senators upon "niggers"; critics who might possibly view the homosexual with a more humane eye seem agreed that it is better that nothing be said. Pressed to the point, they may either, as in the case of such an undeniable homosexual as Hart Crane, contend that they are great despite their "perversion"*—much as my mother used to say how much better a poet Poe would have been had he not taken dope; or where it is possible they have attempted to deny the role of the homosexual in modern art, the usual reply to unprincipled critics like Craven and Benton in painting being to assert that modern artists have not been homosexual. (Much as *PM* goes to great length to prove that none of the Communist leaders have been Jews—as if, if *all*

*Critics of Crane, for instance, consider that his homosexuality is the cause of his inability to adjust to society. Another school feels that inability to adjust to society causes homosexuality. What seems fairly obvious is that what society frustrated in Crane was his effort to write poetry and to write what he wanted to in the way he wanted to. He might well have adjusted his homosexual desires within society as many have done by "living a lie". It was his desire for truth that society condemned.

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the leaders were Jews, it would be that that would make the party suspect.)

But one cannot, in face of the approach taken to their own problem by homosexuals, place any weight of criticism upon the liberal body of critics. For there are Negroes who have joined openly in the struggle for human freedom, made articulate that their struggle against racial prejudice is part of the struggle for all; while there are Jews who have sought no special privilege of recognition for themselves as Jews but have fought for *human* recognition and rights. But there is in the modern scene no homosexual who has been willing to take in his own persecution a battlefront toward human freedom. Almost co-incident with the first declarations for homosexual rights was the growth of a cult of homosexual superiority to the human race; the cultivation of a secret language, the *camp*, a tone and a vocabulary that is loaded with contempt for the human. They have gone beyond, let us say, Christianity in excluding the pagan world.

Outside the ghetto the word "goy" disappears, wavers and dwindles in the Jew's vocabulary. But in what one would believe the most radical, the most enlightened "queer" circles the word "jam" remains, designating all who are not homosexual, filled with an unwavering hostility and fear, gathering an incredible force of exclusion and blindness. It is hard (for all the sympathy which I can bring to bear) to say that this cult plays any other than an evil role in society.

But names cannot be named. I cannot, like Agee, name the nasty little midgets, the entrepreneurs of this vicious market, the pimps of this special product. There are critics whose cynical, back-biting joke upon their audience is no other than this secret special superiority; there are poets whose nostalgic picture of special worth in suffering, sensitivity and magical quality is no other than this intermediate "sixth sense"; there are new cult leaders whose special divinity, whose supernatural and visionary claim is no other than this mystery of sex. The law has declared homosexuality secret, non-human, unnatural (and why not then supernatural?). The law itself sees in it a crime, not in the sense that murder, thievery, seduction of children or rape is seen as a crime—but in an occult sense. In the recent Lonergan case it was clear that murder was a *human* crime, but homosexuality was non-human. It was not a crime against man but a crime against "the way of nature", as defined in the Christian religion, a crime against God."* It was lit up and given an awful and lurid attraction such as witchcraft (I can think of no other immediate example) was given in its time. Like early witches, the homosexual propagandists have rejected any struggle toward recognition in social equality and, far from seeking to undermine the popular superstition, have accepted the charge of Demonism. Sensing the fear in society that is generated in ignorance of their nature, they have sought not to bring about an understanding, to assert their equality and their common aims with mankind, but they have sought to profit by that fear and ignorance, to become witchdoctors in the modern chaos.

To go about this they have had to cover with mystery, to obscure the work of all these who have viewed homosexuality as but one of the many facets, one of the many eyes through which the human being may see and who, admitting through which eye they saw, have had primarily in mind as they wrote (as Melville, Proust or Crane had) mankind and its liberation. For these great early artists their humanity was the source, the sole source, of their work. Thus in *Remembrance of Things Past* Charlus is not seen as the special disintegration of a homosexual but as a human being in disintegration, and the forces that lead to that disintegration, the forces of pride, self-humiliation in love, jealousy, are not special forces but common to all men and women. Thus in Melville, though in *Billy Budd* it is clear that the conflict is homosexual, the forces that make for that conflict, the guilt in passion, the hostility rising from subconscious sources, and the sudden recognition of these forces as it comes to Vere in that story, these are forces which are universal, which rise in other contexts, which in Melville's work have risen in other contexts.

It is, however, the body of Crane that has been most ravaged by these modern ghouls and, once ravaged, stuck up cult-wise in the mystic light of their special cemetery literature. The live body of Crane is there, inviolate; but in the window display of modern poetry, of so many special critics and devotees, is a painted mummy, deep sea green. One may tiptoe by, as the visitors to Lenin's tomb tiptoe by and, once outside, find themselves in a world in his name that has celebrated the defeat of all that he was devoted to. One need only point out in all the homosexual imagery of Crane, in the longing and vision of love, the absence, for instance, of the "English" specialty, the private world of boys' schools and isolate sufferings that has been converted into the poet's intangible "nobility", into the private* sensibility that colors so much of modern writing. Where the Zionists of homosexuality have laid claim to a Palestine of their own, asserting in their miseries their nationality; Crane's suffering, his rebellion, and his love are sources of poetry for him not because they are what make him different from, superior to, mankind, but because he saw in them his link with mankind; he saw in them his sharing in universal human experience.

* * * * *

What can one do in the face of this, both those critics and artists, not homosexuals, who, however, are primarily concerned with all inhumanities, all forces of convention and law that impose a tyranny upon man, and those critics and artists who, as homosexuals, must face in their own lives both the hostility of society in that they are "queer" and the hostility of the homosexual cult of superiority in that they are human?

For the first group the starting point is clear, that they must recognize homosexuals as equals and as equals allow them neither more nor less than can be allowed any human being. For the second group the starting point is more difficult; the problem is more treacherous.

In the face of the hostility of society which I risk in making even the acknowledgment explicit in this statement, in the face of the "crime" of my own feelings, in the past I publicized those feelings as private and made no stand for their recognition but tried to sell them disguised, for instance, as conflicts rising from mystical sources. I colored and perverted simple and direct emotions and realizations into a mysterious realm, a mysterious relation to society. Faced by the inhumanities of society I did not seek a solution in humanity but turned to a second out-cast society as inhumane as the first. I joined those who, while they allowed for my sexual nature, allowed for so little of the moral, the sensible and creative direction which all of living should reflect. They offered a family, outrageous as it was, a community in which one was not condemned for one's homosexuality, but it was necessary there for

*"Just as certain judges assume and are more inclined to pardon murder in inverts and treason in Jews for reasons derived from original sin and racial predestination." *Sodome et Gomorrhe*, Proust.

*By *private* I in no sense mean *personal*.

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one to desert one's humanity for which one would be suspect, "out of key". In drawing rooms and in little magazines I celebrated the cult with a sense of sanctuary such as a Medieval Jew must have found in the ghetto; my voice taking on the modulations which tell of the capitulation to snobbery and the removal from the "common sort"; my poetry exhibiting the objects made divine and tyrannical as the Catholic church has made bones of saints, and bread and wine, tyrannical.

After an evening at one of those salons where the whole atmosphere was one of suggestion and celebration, I returned recently experiencing again the after-shock, the desolate feeling of wrongness, remembering in my own voice and gestures the rehearsal of unfeeling. Alone, not only I, but, I felt, the others who had appeared as I did so mocking, so superior to feeling, had known, knew still, those troubled emotions, the deep and integral longings that we as human beings feel, holding us from violate action by the powerful sense of humanity that is their source, longings that lead us to love, to envision a creative life. "Towards something far," as Hart Crane wrote, "now farther away than ever."

Among those who should understand those emotions which society condemned, one found that the group language did not allow for any feeling at all other than this self-ridicule, this gaiety (it is significant that the homosexual's word for his own kind is "gay"), a wave surging forward, breaking into laughter and then receding, leaving a wake of disillusionment, a disbelief that extended to oneself, to life itself. What then, disowning this career, can one turn to?

What I think can be asserted as a starting point is that only one devotion can be held by a human being a creative life and expression, and that is a devotion to human freedom, toward the liberation of human love, human conflicts, human aspirations. To do this one must disown *all* the special groups (nations, religions, sexes, races) that would claim allegiance. To hold this devotion every written word, every spoken word, every action, every purpose must be examined and considered. The old fears, the old specialties will be there, mocking and tempting; the old protective associations will be there, offering for a surrender of one's humanity congratulations upon one's special nature and value. It must be always recognized that the others, those who have surrendered their humanity, are not less than onself. It must be always remembered that one's own honesty, one's battle against the inhumanity of his own group (be it against patriotism, against bigotry, against, in this specific case, the homosexual cult) is a battle that cannot be won in the immediate scene. The forces of inhumanity are overwhelming, but only one's continued opposition can make any other order possible, will give an added strength for all those who desire freedom and equality to break at last those fetters that seem now so unbreakable.

ROBERT DUNCAN

Mr. Moscowitz Comes to St. Perkingrad

MOSCOW, July 10—On the same day that the Soviet press announced that Eric Johnston, president of the United States Chamber of Commerce, had left Russia, the Moscow newspaper Literature and Art reported that the capital's famous Maly Theatre was rehearsing a play entitled "Mr. Perkins' Mission in the Land of the Bolsheviks," a four-act play by Alexander Aidar dealing with the visit of an influential American industrialist to the U. S. S. R.

According to the paper, the play's central idea is the American's attempt to discover, through investigation of Soviet public opinion and economic system, whether it is possible to trade with the Soviet Union in the normal manner.

Mr. Perkins is shown meeting a series of typical Soviet citizens, farmers and soldiers, and assuring himself that they all think like their country's leaders and that they form a united people. As a result, the hero of the play reaches the conclusion that the United States should in the future have close relations with the Soviet Union,

He is depicted as shedding a number of prejudices acquired from a section of the American press, including that of Hearst. "As a realist and a businessman, Mr. Perkins values the breadth and wisdom of the Soviet peoples point of view, their directness and their modesty," the paper says. "When his secretary, Miss Down, looks appreciatively at Red Army Sergeant Kolotoh, Mr. Perkins says: "That is how all Americans look at him."

The play is described as a comedy of character, lightly touching on the serious question of the relations between peoples of two worlds.

—*N. Y. Times*, July 11, 1944.

With Marshall Stalin in the former Tsar's box, a leading Moscow theatre recently presented the Soviet play of the minute, "Mr. Moscowitz Comes to St. Perkingrad," based on the experiences of President Eric Johnston (Mr. M.) of the U. S. Chamber of Commerce during his Soviet tour. The theme is the gap (if any) between the nature of the social order in the USSR and in the USA. The well-known actor, Andrey Vishinsky, whose artistic efforts Mr. M. always admired, played the title role. Mr. M. is portrayed as a reactionary so unprincipled as to seek to adapt his views (or at least his expressions) to the Soviet norm. There results a series of *faux pas* which sent the Soviet audience into gales of laughter. But like all profound humorists, they saw underneath matters of high seriousness.

The background of Mr. M.'s heroic failure is apparently the ideological preparation he had for his trip. Manhattan gossip columnists have attributed this to a wolf in sheep's clothing, a liberal who pretends to be an honest reactionary: Eugene Lyons.

With such preparation, Mr. M. sets out to visit a Soviet school. The following dialogue ensues:

M. (*nervously playing with his hat*): My daughter is at a convent school.

GUIDE: How many other children have you?

M. (*proudly*): One boy.

GUIDE: Only two children. Is your wife ill?

M.: Why no, we felt that . . .

GUIDE: Bourgeois decadence. Here mothers with less than seven children get no bonus. But you were saying about the school . . .

M.: Oh, Yes. I confess that a convent school is rather old-fashioned and I confess that I fully approve of our co-educational state universities. But I must also confess that my wife is a standpatter who simply insists on separate schools for each sex. But for myself I confess . . .

GUIDE: Co-education is a bourgeois error. Along with all the vicious ideas of progressive education we have liquidated it. Our leader discovered that the Trotskyite educator Tom Dewey was back of it all.

M.: But in your great Prof Pinkevitch's great book on education which Gene gave me to read it says . . .

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GUIDE: We shot him.

M.: Poor Gene!

GUIDE: No, Pinkevitch. Gene can wait. At any rate my compliments to your wife. I am curious about convent schools. We have not yet restored them but I dare say they are very interesting.

M.: Oh. . . .

The visitor is rather slow-witted and continues his efforts to decorate himself with the opinions of his more liberal fellow-citizens. In discussion with a Vice-Commissar of Industry he gets all fouled up:

VICE-COMMISSAR: Your Smith-Connally act is rather deplorable.

M.: Well, it's not as bad you might think. Under certain specific conditions strkes are definitely legal and have taken place in several factories with resulting wage increases for the employees . . . I mean workers.

VICE-COMMISSAR: Workers? Holy Peter! Employees should not be permitted to strike. Interference with production is intolerable no matter what the excuse. It is the work of Trotsky-Quislings.

M.: Oh. . . .

Still learning, M. visits a Soviet court where a divorce suit is in progress. Coming from a social group in the U. S. whose incidence of divorce is roughly equal to its incidence of marriage, he looks mellowly on the proceedings. The dialogue begins:

M.: In Nevada the divorce law, in effect—which, as your philosophers put it, is all that matters—permits divorce by mutual agreement. Some other states are considering following the lead of Reno, if only in order to get the tourist business.

STATE ATTORNEY: Tourist business is forbidden in wartime and controlled by the State in peacetime. As for divorce, we have moved forward to abolish divorce by mutual agreement. Marriage is a state institution, the State wants children, divorce is an evil to be discouraged in every possible way.

M.: Oh . . . .

The poor traveler falls into the same difficulties when he says a word in praise of Planned Parenthood (as he looks at the inmates of a foundling asylum), abstract art (when visiting the Hermitage Museum), the separation of Church and State (outside the church which formerly housed the Museum of the Godless) and the absence of direct political censorship in the U. S. (while lunching with the editors of *Pravda*). He also catches hell when he tells a Soviet Marshal that the U. S. people are rather cold toward General Patton and is dressed down by the President of the Society of Socialist Cartoonists when, referring to the *Esquire* case, he calls Postmaster-General Walker "an old fogy." Says the Cartoonists' bell-wether: "Art must be subordinated to public morals." Another difficulty develops in a historical museum. Pausing before a painting he asks the subject, which turns out to be Ivan the Terrible.

M.: "Well, well. He was as bad as George III."

RED PROFESSOR OF HISTORY: "Who was that?"

M.: "The man we made a revolution against."

PROFESSOR: "Why ever did you do that?"

By the end of the last act poor M. is in a state of developed schizophrenia. Asked confidentially by the Leader of all the Russias for his view of the election campaign he splutters as follows:

"Down with the reactionary Fascist who perpetuates himself for endless terms by means of war-mongering. And down with me, too. I confess everything."

To which the Leader replies in solemn, measured tones, his Marshal's epaulettes waving in the official breeze;

"Down with John Dewey, candidate of the anti-Hague, anti-Poll Tax, Trotsky-Quisling sowers of national disunity."

It need be added only that "Mr. Moscowitz Comes to St. Perkingrad" is a *succes Guepayoo* and that Bosley Crowther reports in the *Times* that Truly Warner has bought the movie rights. Some say for a song — called "The Nationale". Joe Davies is to be cast as Mr. M. and the left shoulder of the Leader of all the Russias will be played (with padding) by Vito ("I Come to Praise Caesar, not to Bury Him") Marcantonio.

BLANQUI

Negroism

Strange Fruit of Segregation

Wilfred H. Kerr

THE *N. Y. Times* of April 9 reported that Adam Clayton Powell, Jr., would run for Congress in the Twenty-Second (Harlem) District on a "Negroes First" platform. Powell confirmed this in his weekly, *The People's Voice*, on April 15: "I will represent the Negro people first. I will represent after that all other American people." This brazen formula spotlights a trend which has been developing in American Negro life for a long time.

It is significant that Powell has taken up "Negroes First", for he is a demagogue of great ability, without any scruples about adopting whatever line he thinks will be popular at the moment. (His real doctrine, of course, is Powell First.) He has been described as a mixture of black Baptist parson and Tammany politician. These qualities—plus his inheritance from his father of the largest Negro church in America, Harlem's Abyssinian Baptist Church—make him a sort of Citizen Kane of the Negro people. He was elected city Councilman against the opposition of all the city's old-line Negro leaders. Today he appears to be the only Negro leader in the country with sufficient mass appeal to be the new Moses.* Powell has been accused of being a Communist, but I believe his present close alliance with the Communists is merely opportunism. He is too vain and ambitious to play in anybody's orchestra; he must have the baton in his own hand. He is a Powellist, not a Communist. When such a clever demagogue as Powell campaigns on a "Negro First" platform, we may be sure that black chauvinism, or "Negroism", is widespread among the Negro masses. This is one of the real danger-points in race relations today.

*In the August primaries, Powell captured the nominations of all 3 parties—Democratic, Republican and American Labor Party. Barring a miracle, he will thus become the first Negro from the East ever to sit in Congress.

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1

Race tension in American life is not diminishing but is on the increase. Education going hand in hand with segregation and discrimination has succeeded only in producing the "New Negro", militant and race-conscious, to whom pride in race is a necessary safeguard for his own self-respect. Education makes it possible for the Negro to compare the word with the deed, the American Credo with the American practice. Even as a boy he is unable to square the precepts of his teachers, and high sounding phrases learnt in the class room, with his actual experiences and with the experiences of those whom he knows, his parents and his companions.

The slavemasters and reactionaries of a century ago who opposed the teaching of the Bible and the art of reading and writing to the Negro were men of realism. They well knew that you cannot bring learning to a man without opening the flood-gates of desire in his mind to participate fully in civilization. The educated Negro is never sure whether he is treated as a man or as a child. He finds that his most cherished desires are curbed at every turn by a superior force. Here is his dilemma. Shall he sink into a cynical, inhumane and comfortless apathy, the road to utter demoralization and perhaps insanity; or shall he adopt scornful and bitter resentment, militant racial struggle and even develop anti-white prejudice to offset anti-Negro.

And so we find that in America today the religion of Negroism, like Judiasm in Egypt, is being slowly born. It is perhaps not accidental that we speak of the American Negro and never of the Negro American.

So widespread is this nationalistic pull that it has forced even men like W. E. B. DuBois and A. Philip Randolph to give up their earlier socialist and integrationist views and to adopt in later life a partial acceptance of nationalism and voluntary segregation.

2

William E. Burghardt Du Bois came into prominence at the beginning of this century as the most effective foe of Booker T. Washington and the Tuskegee machine. After the Northern capitalists had withdrawn from the South in the seventies and left the Negro to the mercies of the Southerners, a situation was created where the united white ruling class was looking about for a Negro leadership which would adapt the colored race to the humble and inferior role henceforth designed for it. Booker T. Washington was their man. He was no disbeliever in human equality but he was an opportunist on the grand scale. He believed that at a time when the enemy besieges, one must either retreat or hide in the cellar. Tomorrow, under more favorable conditions one may attack. The Negro, he said, must accept segregation (at least for the present), then he must give up his dreams of higher education. In education emphasis must be placed on training in skilled trades and industry and common labor. Through thrift industry and patience the race will rise.

To the newly created group of rapacious capitalists and their southern lackeys, Washington's program came as a godsend. It gave them an opportunity to develop a passive dependable labor force, one that they could play off against the white trade unions which were even then spreading into the South. Andrew Carnegie rewarded Tuskegee in 1903 with a gift of $600,000. Other gifts, many of them hidden and never made public, were rained down. The President of the United States publicly annointed Washington THE LEADER of the Negro people and more money and resources were placed at his command than any combination of American Negroes with the possible exception of Marcus Garvey, has ever received. The Washington program was nothing but a grand conspiracy. No Negro could dare to aspire to any responsible public or even private position who had crossed the path of this potentate. After Du Bois had published his *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903), Atlanta University, where he taught, found it difficult to raise funds. It was delicately hinted that Du Bois was the cause.

When Du Bois took up the cudgels against Washington he declared that the progress of the race demanded the creation of an intelligent and cultured leadership. This would be impossible under Washington's program. He further declared that the Negro industrial school was unfit to meet the highly technical and changing needs of modern society and that the white financiers who supported it did not want it to do so. "Du Bois demanded full social and political equality for Negroes, according to the Constitution," writes Gunnar Myrdal in *An American Dilemma*, "and complete cultural assimilation. And he offered his demands not as ultimate goals but as a matter of practical policy of the day."

In June, 1905, Du Bois sent out a call from Atlanta to some thirty Negro intellectuals to meet at Niagara Falls. This conference, which became known as "the Niagara Movement", declared for such things as: 1. an infettered and unsubsidized press (it was charged that Washington's friends were buying up the Negro press); 2. full voting rights for Negroes; 3. recognition of higher education as the monopoly of no race or class. "They had high hopes of forming a national protest organization," writes Myrdal, "to wage a battle against all forms of segregation and discrimination, and, incidentally, against Washington's gradualist and conciliatory policy, which, they considered, sold out Negroes' rights for a pittance and even broke their courage to protest." Four years later, practically the whole membership of the Niagara Movement joined with such whites as William English Walling, Joel Spingarn, and Mary White Ovington to form the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. Du Bois became its Director of Publicity and Research and Editor of its official organ, *The Crisis*.

In 1934, Du Bois resigned from the Board of Directors of the N.A.A.C.P. and the Editorship of *The Crisis* as a result of a long and bitter struggle within the organization. His letter of resignation, dated June 26, 1934, contained some very harsh words. He accused the Association of having no program for the times and the Executive Officers of incompetence and indifference. What was the cause of this fateful split? Early in the 1930's Du Bois had come to believe that the liberal opinion toward prejudice and discrimination which he and the Association shared was no longer valid. The liberal believes that prejudice can be dissipated by an assault of reason. All that is needed to change the racial concepts of man is to carry

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on a ceaseless agitation, propaganda and educational campaign against them. Sooner or later, truth will prevail. Mankind will come to see that race prejudice is both unjust and unprofitable. But here was America the most literate, the most educated country in the world, and despite a quarter of century of agitation by the Association and by persons like himself, jimcrow still stood fast. It was, therefore, necessary for the N.A.A.C.P. to change its program.

Du Bois believed that the white-worker and the white middle class were the most bitter enemies of the Negro, and so he rejected Socialism and Communism. He came out for a co-operative black economy. "Internal self-organization" is what he called it, recommending that "groups of communities and farms inhabited by colored folk should be voluntarily formed." He tried to show how it could be done: "We can work for ourselves. We can consume mainly what we ourselves produce, and produce as large a proportion as possible of that which we consume. There would be white monopoly and privilege to fight, but only stupidity and disloyalty could actually stop progress. Expel both unflinchingly. . . . We are fleeing not simply from poverty, but from insult and murder and social death. We have an instinct of race and a bond of color, in place of a protective tariff for our infant industry. We have, as police power, social ostracism within to coerce a race thrown back upon itself by ostracism without; and behind us if we will survive is Must, not May." (*The Crisis*, April, 1933).

Such a point of view is not incompatible with segregation. Indeed, it calls upon the Negro to voluntarily segregate himself. Du Bois thus opened an attack on "No Segregation" early in 1934. He denied that the N.A.A.C.P. was historically opposed to segregation, saying that it had no fixed opinion on it, and had even accepted it on such occasions as the separate Negro Officer camps in World War I and the Tuskegee Veterans Hospital. In reply, the officers of the Association pointed out that these things had been opposed, but once instituted against their will, nothing could be done other than to fight for improvement of the setup. They failed to say, however, that Joel E. Spingarn, a leading figure in the Association, had personally endorsed these segregated facilities.

In *The Dusk of Dawn* (1940), Du Bois admitted: "To a degree, but not completely, this is a program of segregation. The consumer group is in important aspects a self-segregated group. We are now segregated largely without reason. Let us put reason and power beneath this segregation." And of some segregated Federal financed projects he wrote: "Rail if you will against the race segregation here involved and condoned, but take advantage of it by planting secure centers of Negro co-operative effort and particularly of economic power to make us spiritually free for initiative and creation in other and wider fields, and for eventually breaking down all segregation based on color and curl of hair".

These last two statements are quoted by Gunnar Myrdal in *An American Dilemma*. In a footnote, Myrdal points out correctly that the vested Negro interests which would arise under such a system would give the caste system a moral sanction. The Du Bois plan would certainly make segregation permanent.

Du Bois never tells us how the Negro would acquire the capital for this economy. Whether through savings or by Government loans and finances. Obviously if the Government financed it, then the Negro would be nothing but a ward of and subject to the whim of the white electorate. If through savings, the Negro could not hope to capture the citadels of American Capital—the banks and other institutions of credit, the public utilities, the railroads and transportation. The Negro Economy conceived as a Nation within a Nation could exist only on the sufferance of white capital and to be used as its tool.

This economy would be a consumers' economy, says Du Bois, and profit would be eliminated. Then the Negro bourgeoisie will fight it with savage intensity. From our point of view, the attempt to use the worthy idea of the Consumers' Cooperative in the service of racial chauvinism is something never to be tolerated.

Du Bois left the N.A.A.C.P. to accept a professorship in Atlanta University. From this point, thirty years before, he had set out to conquer the South. Now he is the south's prisoner. He continues to write books, magazine and newspaper articles developing his new concept of race, but he has grown too aloof, too aristocratic in manner, to attract a mass following.*

3

In July, 1943, the March on Washington Movement held its first national convention in Chicago. At this convention, a constitutional clause was voted barring all white people from membership. The Director of the MOW and its undisputed leader and moral head is A. Philip Randolph, a trade unionist with a long and honorable career in the labor movement. He is President of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters. He was also for many years a member of the Socialist Party and from 1919 to 1924 edited *The Messenger*, which boasted that it was the foremost Negro radical magazine in the country.

Randolph supported the anti-white resolution. Indeed it could not have passed had he not blessed it with his moral authority. No one who knows the March On Washington Movement can believe that any important resolution can be successful which is opposed by him. The resolution was passed with no more than two or three opposing votes and it was endorsed by some leading Negro socialists—Miss Layle Lane of New York, for instance. When professed socialists and inter-racialists are ready to defend an action such as this, it is worth examining closely the issues involved.

When Marcus Garvey was at his height in 1920-1923, Randolph attacked him in his editorial columns, preaching trade-unionism and socialism as the roads which the Negro must take. Garveyism is the high point, to date, of American Negroism. Marcus Garvey, who was a full black, ridiculed and treated with contempt the mulattoes and 'near whites' of his race. He loved to boast that he was the grandson of an African slave. He carried out to its full

*After this article was written, it was announced that DuBois would return to the N.A.A.C.P. to head a committee on the postwar needs of the Negro. Since DuBois has not changed his position, this would seem to be a concession to Negroism and one more indication of the way the wind is blowing.

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logical absurdity the doctrines of Negroism, refusing to become a citizen, dissuading his followers from exercising their citizenship rights and taking political action in America. He successively preached Negro business—he started as a disciple of Booker T. Washington—then Back To Africa, and finally that last mad dream of a paranoiac, an African Black Empire. No one knows how many followers Garvey had, perhaps as many as four million. His wife and secretary has stated that between the years 1919 and 1921 he took in ten million dollars; Garvey himself testified that the Black Star Line, an all-Negro business which was to carry trans-oceanic trade, accumulated a deficit of $700,000.

In those days when Garvey was acclaimed as the 'Provisional President-General of Africa' it tooks guts to attack him. People who fought him were known to be severely beaten and at least one of his lieutenants who broke with him was ambushed and killed under suspicious circumstances. Randolph and *The Messenger* attacked Garvey unmercifully. Garveyism was a social disease which must be destroyed. "Only solidarity can save the black and white workers of America" he said "and this solidarity must be developed in mixed unions composed of black and white, Jew and Gentile, native and foreign." A great deal of Garveyist propaganda went to develop what is called race-consciousness or rather race pride—that is, it pictured all the Negro people as potential saints and geniuses. Randolph continually pointed out that blackguardism was no monopoly of the white race. The issue is economics and not race. "A black landlord is no more sympathetic with black tenants than white landlords are." An all-Negro organization, Randolph further pointed out, must lead to ridicule of light-skinned Negroes, to racial chauvinism and to African imperialism. Garvey was no piker. He went his critic one better, not only visioning a great African Empire, but also organizing a new all-colored religion: The African Orthodox Church, with black God, black Jesus and black Madonna all complete.

Has the situation changed today so radically that what Randolph said in the 20's is no longer true? Randolph has never said so explicitly, and yet, to the delight of the remnants of the Garvey Movement in Harlem, he has accepted the first and most essential of Garvey's propositions: the all-Negro organization. After the 1943 MOW Conference had barred whites from the organization solely on racial grounds, many ex-Garveyites hastened to join the MOW. On February 17, 1944, Randolph called a conference of Negro representatives together at the Harlem Y. M. C. A. to map plans to bargain with the major parties for Negro rights and also to discuss the possibility of independent Negro political action. After Randolph had spoken and said that not one penny should be accepted from any white man for this effort, George Weston, a leading nationalist of Harlem rose to praise him. In a speech in which the orator said he spoke "as one inspired", Weston said to Randolph: "The mantle of Marcus Garvey has fallen upon your shoulders. I do not know why you are afraid to accept it".

Some say the explanation of the MOW's anti-white clause is to be found in Randolph's experiences with the Stalinists. They were his greatest enemies in building the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, and the National Negro Congress which he originally led was taken over by them in no time. It is in his speech of resignation from the National Negro Congress that we find the first threads of Randolph's new doctrine. The Communists, however, do not seek to dominate organizations because they are white. They do so because they are Communists. White organizations have charged them with the same crime. Moreover, the anti-white clause does not bar Negro Communists, but only white ones. This could not be what Randolph wanted. It would have been far more practical and sensible had the MOW passed a resolution declaring its faith in the democratic ideal and denying membership to all advocates of totalitarianism.

Randolph, himself, does not rest his case on mere anti-Communism. He has stated his belief in *The World Crisis and the Negro People Today:*

"The only rational conclusion then seems to be that the Negro and other darker races must look to themselves for freedom. . . . Yes, Salvation must come from within. Charity and philanthropy from the Left, or the Communists or Socialists, is just as unsound, illogical and objectionable as charity and philanthropy from the right, the capitalists. For with charity and philanthropy go control, since the power over a man's subsistence is the power over his will. He who pays the fiddler will call the tune. . . . In very truth the Negro must save himself. He must depend on his own right arm, together with the co-operation of his true white friends."

The last sentence is very interesting. If there are actually such persons as "true white friends", is it not strange that they should be excluded from his organization?

Why does Randolph, an old trade unionist and socialist, speak of "Salvation" and "charity and philanthropy from the left." Nowhere in socialist and labor philosophy is such a doctrine to be found. What is said is simply this. Negroes and poor whites of America, you have a common enemy. Race prejudice is deliberately cultivated by that enemy to keep you from uniting. Segregation exists for that purpose. Colored brothers, do not think that all the whites are sitting in clover. White brothers, do not think that your colored brothers are your social inferiors. Remain separated and each of you will lose his battle. Learn to fight together and victory is a certainty. This is no nonsense of charity and philanthropy. This is a gospel of revolutionary unity.

This writer does not believe that Randolph is aware of all the implications of his theories. Randolph is essentially a poet and an artist. In the rarified and idealistic atmosphere in which he dwells, he is able to hold in perfect balance the ideas of inter-racialism and racial exclusion. Not so the average Negro. If some Jimmy Higgins of the MOW were questioned on the anti-white policy of his organization he would probably reply that white people are not to be trusted. And he means all of them. It cannot be denied that this line of Randolph tends to intensify distrust in the mind of the Negro and to hurt and puzzle these good white friends whom he acknowledges. In a time when mutual understanding is indispensable to the building of democracy, this amounts to a social crime.

The importance of building Negro leadership and in-

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tiative can never be underestimated. It is not true, however, that Negro leadership can be developed only in an all-Negro organization. Ferdinand Smith and Walter Hardin are both Negro leaders, yet one was developed in the National Maritime Union and the other in the United Automobile Workers Union. Randolph, himself, was discovered, trained, and built by the Socialist Party. The N.A.A.C.P. at its inception was controlled financially, morally and intellectually by whites. Today a small percentage of its funds come from whites and the dominant leaders of the organization are colored men: Walter White, Hastie, Wilkins, Marshall. The branches, which have a large degree of autonomy, are practically all-Negro organizations.

Randolph seems to be worried lest the Negro cease carrying his share of the fight against lynching, against segregation and discrimination in the armed forces and in industrial life. Randolph need not worry. The Negro stands at the bottom of the social ladder and he is pressed harder and harder every day. He will and must fight. History has bequeathed to him the privilege of being the foremost leader in the fight for democracy.

4

The essence of Randolph's doctrine is that the Negro Problem is the Negro's problem. To the Negro people he says "This is your fight". To the white people he seems to say "You can help when we let you". This is a doctrine so wrong and so full of dangers that it must be hunted down to the earth, killed, and buried. The Negro Problem is not just the Negro's problem. It is not even the problem of that mythical entity 'the nation' or of the twentieth century as some people have put it. To be specific the Negro Problem is the problem of the American people. Unless the Negro is aroused, encouraged and aided by the progressive whites and the labor movement of this country, his efforts are doomed to failure. Randolph's philosophy gives the white people of America an excuse for standing aside and criticizing when the problem is as much theirs as it is the Negro's.

The labor movement has been engaged since the inception of capitalism in a struggle against its exploiters, themselves white. No greater ally can it hope to get than the thirteen million colored Americans. Today this labor movement is busy throwing money down the drain. It is spending hundreds of thousands of dollars to elect rogues and hypocrites to Congress. The coffers of the trade unions are bursting; their dues-paying membership now stands at an all-time high figure. It is not wrong, it is only commonsense for the Negro people to look to the trade unions for aid. Randolph himself, despite his talk about the colored people looking only to themselves for freedom, continues to be active in inter-racial organizations. Why does he not abandon his inter-racial work as being wasteful and unprincipled? His pet project today is the National Council For a Permanent F.E.P.C. and he serves as Co-Chairman with a white man. This is a worthwhile and efficient Committee. Most of the funds of this Committee are being raised by white people, by two large trade unions with headquarters in New York City. Randolph does not denounce these contributions as Charity and philanthropy from the Left.

We must expect in the post-war world a new high of Negro nationalism. It will probably take two avenues. First, some colonization scheme, or even a revival of the Back to Africa Movement, whose followers will be the low-class unassimilated Negro with no hope or interest in the American system. This movement may well be supported by our unreconstructed rebels, the Bilbos and the Cotton Ed Smiths. Second, the more educated Negro, expressing his race-consciousness in the patterns of Du Bois and Randolph, will form all-Negro organizations, businesses and co-operatives. America will witness the rise of many local Negro political parties and perhaps a national one. Already there is "kitchen talk" about such a thing.

This Negroism will have national and international roots. After the war, the Negro, last to be hired, will be first to be fired. The discharged Negro serviceman will rankle with bitter memories of his life in the Army and Navy camps. On the international scene there will be presented the spectacle of over a billion colored colonials —Africans, Asiatics, South Americans—groaning and sweating to support the might and pomp of the great white empires. The resistance of these colonials, culminating perhaps in strikes, revolts and revolutions, will take on the aspect of a holy race war. The Negro, imprisoned in the ghettos of the American cities and in the black belts of the rural districts, will follow the struggle of these people with undivided sympathy.

Negroism is the direct result of the cruelties, the discriminatory practices, the indifference of the dominant whites to the Negro for two hundred years. No small contribution to it has been made by the vacillating and cowardly policies of the American and international working-class leaders. It can be eradicated only by a very long and persistent effort on the part of many white people to remedy this injustice.

No mere mawkish liberal sentimentality can solve the color problem. Not long ago, I attended an Inter-racial Conference called by the City Wide Citizens' Committee on Harlem. One of the leaders of the panel discussion was a young attractive lady, the daughter of a renowned father, herself with some accomplishments. She began by telling us of a perfectly wonderful colored friend of hers who only the other day had told her how much extraordinary courage it takes to be a Negro. The average white person could not stand it. Just imagine this person, brave by sole virtue of his race! The good lady did not mention her friend's name but I am willing to wager that he is both a humbug and a bore. Here is nothing but the old coat of Causasian chauvinism turned inside out.

The great political and social struggles of the future will revolve around the question of who is going to pay for the war. It is mathematically and socially impossible for the entire burden of debt paying, military preparedness and an imperialist police force, not to speak of the rehabilitation of Europe, to be shifted on the backs of the backward people of the earth. In some way the workers at home will be called upon to pay too. The class least organized and least advanced must pay the piper. The intelligent Negro and labor leaders know this. This is the cause of the panicky tone which creeps into their official optimism and sometimes drowns it out.

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We are living in a period when what we know as Western Civilization is breaking up and either chaos and a new dark ages or World Civilization will take its place. In such times Negroism and all nationalist prejudices can only be a reactionary program, the conscious or unconscious tool of the imperialists. The whip of common privation will create a demand for unity between white and black worker. A disciplined and energetic organization composed of members of all races and conscious of the fact that racial equality can be realized only with the overthrow of the imperialist system must be formed and with patience, commonsense and common struggle forge this equality with bands of steel.

Popular Culture

On Highbrow Writing

IT is understandable that the unpublished fiction-writer, or the unproduced playwright, generally blames the social structure of capitalism, or the conditions of contemporary culture, for his difficulties. The usual form of the complaint is to rake up another century for comparision. A friend of mine, a teacher of English at a college in Wisconsin, once wrote a very nice three-act satirical play about a Minnesota family who are quarreling about an inheritance, something along the lines of Henri Becque's *Les Corbeaux*. My friend thinks his is a superb drama, and in terms of high seriousness that it is superior to the hokum shows that are always being produced on Broadway. He grows increasingly bitter about cultural conditions, or let us say the dryness of the earth in which he tries to plant his dramatic seeds, whenever another Broadway producer mails back his script. Occasionally, he writes me a letter in which he states that Ibsen had no trouble about producing his plays in 1870 in Norway, and Shakespeare got his plays produced in London in 1601, and obviously we live in a most peculiar age when the theatre has degenerated into a bargain basement for merchandising second-hand or shopworn but surefire emotions. The same complaint is heard from short-story writers who say that you cannot receive those fat checks from *The Saturday Evening Post* unless you are prepared to prostitute yourself and write pieces about a funny tractor-salesman, or where the boy gets the girl and they do a long clinch in the last paragraph of the ms.

To listen to some unpopular authors talk you would think that publishers or theatrical producers used to be charitable souls, with a passion for pure poetry, until we recently stumbled into the third period of capitalism. A few broadminded unpopular authors are willing to admit that the Elizabethan producer was also interested in showing a net profit at the end of the season, and the broadminded unpopular author then shifts his argument, and says, "Well, why is it that good plays don't get produced, and why isn't good poetry popular, or why doesn't the Satevepost print good stories? Popular taste is getting more cheapened—there's a yawning canyon between the public purse and the serious and skillful artist, the craftsman who has something to say."

There are several answers to this argument. In the first place, writers like Shakespeare and Ibsen got their plays produced not by teaching English or Norwegian at a college and living 1,300 miles from the stage,—the actors, the scenic designers, the directors. You have got to be in and of the medium, knowing what the people want to pay for in the way of amusement,—is it ghosts and plenty of bloodshed, or the romantic comedy where the Duke does not know it is a girl he has fallen in love with till act five,—and you not only have to know what the people want at any moment, as their desires fluctuate from one season to another, but also you have to have the first-hand sense of the conditions of the medium. And then, of course, there is still the heart of it all, the only job really worth doing,—of adjusting one's own craving to express the mysteries of people and their deeper relations to the world as a whole, and adjusting this inner artistic urge to the demands of current taste and the transient conditions of a medium as you find it, rather than as you would like it to be. How can one do the job by running away from the public arena, or by not immersing oneself in the craft?

This the unpopular author is rarely willing to do. He is rarely willing to come to that great humility in which he might confess that perhaps the fault is in himself. In the mind of the unpopular author is always the assumptions of a snobbish romanticism: what matters are *his* peculiar sensations, *his* esoteric exacerbations of the soul, *his* purely personal urge to try an experiment in style. Although the advanced guardist is often a Marxian materialist, or a Thomist, or a disciple of William James, like Gertrude Stein, in his attitude toward his job of creative work he is strictly Lord Byron out on a tear. He ends up either by coming to a rational moderate viewpoint and becoming a popular author like Hemingway, or in some form of multi-lingual madness like Joyce, or in Fascist negation like Céline and Ezra (Benito, I love you) Pound. Or he stops writing altogether and you see his name on the masthead of *Time* Magazine. He lacked that balanced, sober approach to life, in which one reconciles one's own desires with the needs of the society in which he finds himself. "Never was rebel to the arts a friend"—and that goes for the practitioner, as well as the patron of the arts. The advanced guardist is a latitudinarian, and likewise a longitudinarian. The word he needs is *reason*, in the 18th Century use of the word.

Another, and false, assumption of this snobbism is that unpopular authors are good and popular writers are bad, and that as soon as an unpopular author begins to eat regularly without having a grant from the Guggenheim Foundation then there must be something wrong about his work. But there is really nothing about material or social failure that insures artistic quality. Nothing creaks so badly as an old number of *The Hound & Horn*, *Pagany* or *The New Masses*. Maybe one percent of the stories and poems are good, durable work, but most of it is such stuff as cliques are made on, pastiches of the current rage in poetry (ah, a Gerard Manly Hopkins trend!), or the ridiculous school of proletarian prose, which would have

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bored all proletarians stiff. And formulas, too. The boy *not* getting the girl can be a formula too, and there was a long period in which the plots of *Story* magazine stories revolved about a child in the midst of depraved events it could barely comprehend. On the other hand, Ring Lardner did develop in *The Saturday Evening Post,* and the *Post* is currently printing Kay Boyle and William Faulkner, and two years ago it discovered a young Brooklyn writer, Zachary Gold, who violates every so-called formula of the slick magazines, and who writes in a clear, clean style and he has been selling his pieces consistently.

The issues, therefore, are not quite so black-and-white as the unpopular author makes them out to be. In any event, even if the difficulties of publishing a good novel and making it popular were a million times harder than they are, the job would still be up to the writer,—and not to the people or the social system. We've got only one social system to live and we might as well resign ourselves to it. A hungry comrade gets very little intestinal comfort by getting up on a soapbox and proving conclusively that his hunger has been caused by finance-capitalism. Meanwhile, he still needs the price of tonight's dinner.

The unpopular author as a rule is not very happy about the whole situation. He would like to be popular—provided *he* did not have to do anything about it, provided he could continue writing the way his own personal fancy dictates. The unpopular author cannot be happy because, like a pretty girl, he needs admiration and daily compliments. He wants to be told by thousands of readers again and again that they are in love with him. Another reason he is miserable is that he would like to have enough money for a pleasant house, regular meals, imported sherry, custom-tailored tweed suits, limited editions, and a brand new standard-model typewriter. While I would not go as far as Dr. Johnson, who maintained, "No man but a blockhead ever wrote, except for money," there is something in this idea. In order for the author to make money, people simply must want to buy what he writes. Failing this, he is forced to seek one of the substitutes of the unpopular author: teaching, reviewing books, translating novels, editing manuscripts. But the object of a writer ought, properly, to be to write, to write all the time, and, if he is rational, to write what people read in order that he may have the necessary means to a well-ordered and balanced life.

This is a very difficult proposition. But it is very difficult for a man to become the owner of a great factory. He may have to invent a new industrial product, save his money for years, gamble it all in one throw, and then struggle for maybe twenty years until he "puts it over." Why authors should expect any easier or smoother treatment, I cannot imagine. An industrialist, after all, competes only with his contemporaries. But the writer competes with all the great dead writers of the past. Until he crystallizes his own talents into a form of popular culture, the writer may have to do hack-work for ten years, like Balzac, but it seems to me that with the average writer it is much better to be writing almost anything than to be reviewing books for the *New York Herald-Tribune.* The heat dries up, the zing dies down, the talents get rusty in a few years, and Henry Luce is waiting around the corner, a fate worse than death.

When the unpopular author is a good author, his problem resolves itself into a question of morale, of a sane attitude toward his work and his life. The difference between the popular and the unpopular author is not so much a difference of style, or even a difference of attacking characters and situations, so much as it is a difference of theme. The popular author,—whether he is Lyof Tolstoy or Clarence Budington Kelland,—deals with themes that interest many people, such as first love, matrimonial treachery, sudden death, bloody murder,—all the subjects of the movies or of the daytime serials on the radio. The unpopular author, being a romantic, spins out intensely special themes. Very often, the unpopular author writes a superb book, like *The Castle.* More often, it is the popular writers, the ones who deliberately make it their business to learn their crafts in such a way as to make their creative phantasies appeal to the popular taste, who write the enduring things.

It seems to me that the first step the author must take is moral: a personal road back to the country in which he lives, to a sympathy for the values of his time, to a love of the people in his country. Cynicism, snobbery, the negations of romanticism are deadly to us. And we've been through a long run of *épater le bourgeois*—from the excesses of early 19th century romanticism, and Baudelaire and Rimbaud spitting in society's face, to the polished sneers of H. L. Mencken. The plague of Marxism, too, has had its effect in spreading doubt of everything in which the writer is immersed, of destroying sympathy and understanding. We can see today how significant was Dostoevsky's struggle against the internationalists, the pious frauds of Marxism and Bakuninism. Note also Silone's gradual disillusionment with party lines and his grasp of the need to embrace the people. Doubt, suspicion, sneering are germs of futility for a writer. The advanced guardists of the 1920's lived in an age where the business man was the motivating force, where had been achieved one of history's strangest horns of plenty, and they lightly tossed it all aside and wrote about *rive-gauche* gin parties.

The unpopular author can, and ought, to be popular. He must first love and understand and sympathize with the people on their own terms. He must, again, be interested in what interests them. He must, completely, want to follow the craft of a writer and not that of a book reviewer or translator. After this change of heart, one ought next to look up one of those writer magazines where they give you the editorial requirements. And editors, the ones I know anyway, are eager to see contributions from unpublished writers, and also from published but unpopular writers because they are ever hunting for fresh slants, vivid language, non-formula pieces that will excite their readers. Just as the Broadway producer is eternally crying for good plays, original scripts—but not from playwrights who have never been backstage and do not know how to make actors get on and off a stage or what to do about a second act.

All that remains is toil and trouble, and without any of the compensation of feeling you are superior to the brute masses.

But it seems like the only rational course to follow. After the experience of two generations of left-mountebankery, any other way seems rather futile.

MAURICE ZOLOTOW

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On Lowbrow Thinking

Mr. Zolotow's article is, I think, a most significant document. Rarely does one find a purveyor of Popular Culture willing to defend his trade so frankly—in fact, to take the offensive against serious writing. The author is well qualified to expertize on the subject, for he has known both worlds, having been in the early thirties an "advanced" poet himself, and of late years having become a successful commercial writer, whose articles on Broadway life regularly appear in the *Saturday Evening Post*. The student of Popular Culture must listen to the words of such a one with interest if not respect: he is a spokesman for his more cautious brethren. What they talk about among themselves at the Stork Club, lounging about in their custom-tailored tweed suits and sipping their imported sherry, Zolotow has set down in cold print. Webster—or was it Tad?—used to have a cartoon strip called "Wonder What a (Golf Ball or some other inanimate object) Thinks About?" Here we have the answer to an equally intriguing question: Wonder what a commercial writer thinks about? A significant, perhaps even a unique document.

The most striking thing about the article is the psychological insecurity it shows, which manifests itself in such extreme statements as that it is writers like Clarence Buddington Kelland (who is coupled with Tolstoy) who "write the enduring things today." Another symptom of insecurity is the technique of denigrating serious writing by considering it always on its lowest level. It is undeniable that many avantgardist writers are poseurs, that back issues of avantgarde magazines contain bad stuff, that "the boy *not* getting the girl can be a formula." It would also seem, from Zolotow's account at least, that the English-teacher friend's highbrow plays are pretty terrible—at least *Les Corbeaux* hardly seems a promising model for a serious modern play. But all this is irrelevant, unless one maintains that the mere will to create serious literature automatically produces good writing. Let Zolotow consider the best in "advanced" writing—Joyce, James, Eliot, Rimbaud, Proust, Rilke, Kafka—and let him demonstrate the superiority to it of the best in commercial fiction—say, Clarence Buddington Kelland, or we'll even let him have John Steinbeck—and then the argument will begin to get somewhere.

Another notable feature of the above exhibit is the author's profound disinterest in standards, values, criteria; and the useful historical blindness it makes possible, whereby he can assume that the conditions of communicating on a high artistic level with a mass audience are as favorable today as they were in Elizabethan times. The modern unpopular playwright, runs Zolotow's reasoning, cuts himself off from the actual theatre; Shakespeare didn't. Therefore Shakespeare's plays got produced, since he knew the ropes and met the requirements, whereas the modern playwright's stuff doesn't. The advanced writer is unwilling to learn his craft, to submit himself to the discipline of "what the people want" (read, "what the Shuberts, the Goldwyns, and the editors of the *Saturday Evening Post* think the people want, or should want"). This is all perfectly true, but it is also true that society has changed rather profoundly since Shakespeare's day, and that where good art once resulted from such a submission, bad art results today. But Zolotow, of course, denies it is bad art. Why? Because he lacks taste, understanding? Perhaps, but I think there is a more basic reason: because he accepts this society, *politically*, as good. His side remark about the pathetic struggles of "the owner of a great factory" to make an honest livelihood reveals that he agrees with the politics as well as the esthetics of the *Satevepost*. So deeply has he accepted present-day society, indeed, that he actually believes that the motivating force behind *all* writers, highbrow and lowbrow alike, is a desire (a) "to be told by thousands of readers again and again that they are in love with him", and (b) to have a nice house, a new typewriter, imported sherry and tailored suits. As Gertrude Stein once remarked in *Partisan Review* (I quote from memory): "To have an audience is nice always"—but if the secret motivation of most avantgarde writers is national popularity, then they are going about it in a most curious way. As for the sherry, suits, etc. (except, possibly, the typewriter, which *is* tempting), I have never felt any overpowering urge to acquire such things, nor have I observed it in my fellow highbrows. What Zolotow is really saying is the tautology that it is silly of writers to write avantgarde stuff if they want to be popular and to live luxuriously.

The key sentence is: "We've only got one social system to live and we might as well resign ourselves to it." In the first place, this is not necessarily true. Social systems, to the perennial amazement of the Zolotows, change; and the change may well take place in our lifetimes. Even if the statement turns out to be true—that is, if the system fails to change radically in the next thirty years, or changes for the worse—we might as well *not* resign ourselves to it, since it is a lousy system and to resign one's self to it is to become as corrupt and dead as it is. (Note that Zolotow says "resign", a word implying that one knows better but what the hell. Certain intellectuals really don't know better, and their work is much less likely not to suffer—or at least to fall below the level of their individual potentialities—than that of these who do know and who "resign" themselves.) In the past hundred years, most of the art and literature of permanent value has been created by those who either rebelled directly against bourgeois democracy, or else rejected it by ignoring it. But Zolotow sees "the heart of it all" in "adjusting this inner artistic urge to the demands of current taste." He pleads for "that balanced, sober approach to life, in which one reconciles one's own desires with the needs of the society in which he finds himself." To adjust or not to adjust—that is the question which a society organized ever more comprehensively along anti-human lines poses to the modern individual. Personally, I say to hell with Zolotow's "balanced, sober approach" and to hell with adjusting to the *Satevepost* and Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer. When we're all eighty-five, it will be time enough to consider Zolotow's "balanced, sober approach to life"; meanwhile, let's have a drink and get off balance!

It is hilarious to find this apologist for the *Satevepost* winding up with a plea for the kind of "positive", nationalist cultural approach that MacLeish and Van Wyck Brooks have recently been urging in terms considerably more dignified (but with a content just as Philistine). The mood of Brooks-MacLeish, of Dr. Goebbels' denunciations of "kulturbolshevismus", of the crusade for "socialist realism" and again "formalism" in the Soviet Union, most recently of Bernard DeVoto's "The Literary Fallacy" and of Bruce Bliven's "Hang-Back Boys"—how perfectly it is all summed up in Zolotow's: "Doubt, suspicion, sneering

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are germs of futility for a writer." Doubt not, that ye be not doubted. This mood has come to pervade all levels of our culture today. It is a mood of Yea-saying, of revulsion against the rebellious criticism of the twenties and early thirties, and it means quite simply making one's peace with all "the old crap" of respectable exploitative society with its bishops and bondholders and soap operas and thermite bombs and fireside chats and admirals and public relations counsellors. And of course this process is presented in the usual transposition as getting close to "the people", who are presumably edified by the bishops, fed by the bondholders, educated by the soap operas, healed by the bombs, enlightened by the fireside chats, taught to swim by the admirals, and instructed in how to build a better society by the public relations counsellors. The wolf could never understand why the sheep failed to realize that their interests were identical with his, especially after they were in his belly.

DWIGHT MACDONALD

Books

Labor and Management in the Soviet Union*

These two books are so different from the kind apparently written in an airplane between glimpses at the country that the reader is almost resentful at the amount of trouble taken by the authors in finding out what they were talking about. The painfully collected solid materials are something of a burden on readers whose digestions have been spoiled by living on frothy verbalizations.

Mr. Bergson examines the spread of wage rates paid to workers in Russia at various dates and in the United States in 1904. He compares these mainly in terms of the quartile ratio (the ratio of the lowest to the highest wage of the 50 percent of the workers in the center of the range, i.e. leaving out the 25 percent best paid and the 25 percent worst paid). In a very careful study he shows that the inequality of wage rates in the Soviet Union in 1928 was just about as great as in the United States in 1904 (when the stage of technical development was also roughly about the same as in the Soviet Union in 1928), and that there were two cycles of diminishing and increasing inequality of wages in Russia from the revolution to 1934.

Mr. Bergson interprets this as the victory of capitalistic wage principles over equalitarian ideals held by most socialists, such a victory being forced by the necessity of recognizing the same principles of having wages corresponding to marginal productivity in order to provide the proper incentives for industry and training and the undertaking of more strenuous, more responsible and more unpleasant kinds of work. It seems to the reviewer unnecessary to give the name "capitalist" to the much more general principle of using the price mechanism to evaluate different kinds of labor according to their social significance, or to use differential wages as incentives for effort. As both Marx and Stalin have pointed out, such pricing is necessary for efficiency in any society which has not yet reached a condition of plenty of everything for everybody.

It is unfortunate that Mr. Bergson's study stops in 1934, so that it is already largely out of date as an indication of the present conditions and of trends even before the war. The book also suffers from the Russian treatment of economic procedures as high state secrets, so that everything has to be deduced from what statistics happen to be available, from careful scrutiny of official regulations and from much ingenious detective work to give doubtful answers to questions that could be answered very easily by those who have to apply the regulations, if they were free to speak. There results a kind of dry remoteness of which the author is no doubt fully aware; the reader cannot grumble at the author but rather must sympathize with him on the necessity for such exercises.

Perhaps one slight grumble is permitted at the absence of any attempt to say anything about the socially more significant inequalities that exist between the greater extremes in the Soviet Union—between the lowest paid workers and the highest paid captains of industry and the political bosses. But again this grumble is not really in order, for that could hardly fit into the rigorous scheme of inductive study that the author sets himself.

Management in Russian Industry and Agriculture is able to overcome this dryness, even though it is equally full of statistics, because the authors, instead of having only visited Russia and been forced to rely mainly on guesses about how much the Soviet Decrees can be taken at their face value, are men who grew up in Russia, played an active part in Russian economic and political life in the early years of the revolution and are able to read between the lines of official documents. Their insight into the nature and problems of the Soviet Union has enabled them to make an extremely effective use of even such fluid materials as Russian *belles lettres*.

This book concentrates on the problem of the allocation of responsibility for managerial decisions and on the relation of the responsibility of the manager to the carrying out of the national economic plan. The development of different organizations and of different practices, complicated by political turns and the recognition and correction of errors of policy make the matter very difficult. The main conclusion that emerges seems to be that, by the beginning of the war, a great many of the growing pains shown in the conflicts between different groups interests (dramatized in the so-called "trials") were largely over. This does not mean, as many friends of the Soviet Union persuade themselves, that the successful *gleich-schaltung* has laid the basis for the emergence of a new democracy. This would be no more true than the story one hears so often now that there must be democracy in Russia or the people would not fight so well—an argument that is seldom used to "prove" that there must be democracy in Germany or Japan. What does seem to be the case is that the Russian form of economy has been stablized after having succeeded in building up a population that accepts the regime, is enthusiastic for it, does not know of the possibility of the existence of any other freer society, and especially is completely innocent of the original idea of socialist society as one in which the individual freedoms, developed in rudimentary fashion by capitalist society, can grow to their full promise. Many of the conflicts between the party man and the specialist have disappeared now that there are enough party men who are specialists at the same time, or specialists who have learned how to live with the party.

*"The Structure of Soviet Wages, A Study in Socialist Economics." By Abram Bergson, Harvard Economic Studies, Vol. LXXVI. Harvard University Press. $3. "Management in Russian Industry and Agriculture." By Gregory Bienstock, Solomon M. Schwartz, and A. Yugow, with an introduction by Jacob Marschak. Studies of the Institute of World Affairs. Oxford. $3.

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One other lesson that emerges from both of these studies is that enormous suffering has been caused in part by an ignorance of elementary principles of economics that were inaccessible to the authorities in Russia because they were labelled "bourgeois". The pure "bourgeois" theory of socialist economics has demonstrated for many years that the problem facing the socialist is the conflict between the social ideal of economic equalitarianism and the economic ideal of every factor of production being priced at the value of its marginal product. The former ideal is prized because it would eliminate the existence of groups of people living in different ways and therefore incapable of understanding or feeling each other's problems. This is the real meaning of the "classless society" as a social goal. The latter ideal is valued because it would lead to the most effective use of resources. It would provide every manager and every planner with a measure of the relative usefulness of the different productive factors, thus enabling him to economise in the use of the different productive factors in the degree which is appropriate. It would also provide every worker with just the right degree of incentive to work hard and learn useful skills. The consistent recognition of the principle of appropriate incentives would have helped to prevent the tragedy of the wholesale enforced collectivization and the resulting famine that "bourgeois" economists who knew what was happening were able to predict.

More important still for the present and the future of the Soviet Union is the distinction between wage and income differentials that are necessary as incentives for encouraging hard work and enterprise and the acquisition of socially useful skills, and income differentials which do not perform this function. The former would tend to diminish as equality of opportunity sends more men to the parts of the economy where scarce and therefore valuable skills obtain high rewards. The latter kind of differentiation of income would rather tend to perpetuate itself and represents the emergence of a new kind of privileged economic stratum. The members of such a stratum may honestly believe that they get a greater pay because their work is "more important". But if the only indication that it is more important is that it gets better pay, and if others are not free to enter into the field and by competition reduce these high rewards, such justification is nothing but another form of self-flattering class ideology.

One of the authors of the book on Russian management is convinced that there has emerged in Russia just such a class of self-perpetuating enjoyers of social privilege. He gives strong evidence in statistics of the status of the parents of those who are able to obtain higher education, showing that the percentage of manual workers and their children in higher institutions of study and training had fallen from more than 60 percent in 1930 and 1933 to less than 45 percent in 1938, in spite of a narrowing of the definition of "Salaried employees and specialists", while the proportion of peasants and their children getting such training remains very small (pages 111-112). The other two authors do not find the evidence quite conclusive.

What is important is how this has been developing since the war began and how it will develop in the future. The importance of this question can hardly be overestimated. For if equality of economic opportunity should remain and/or develop in the Soviet Union, there will be a possibility of the growth of a democratic society that could live in peace with the rest of the world. But if there should instead be a consolidation of the dictatorship of a privileged stratum, which must hide from the mass of the population any truth about freedom and prosperity outside of the Soviet Union, we will have the stage well prepared for World War III. The ambitious privileged class of Russia will need to remove the dangers of freedom as too revolutionary an example for the Russian masses and will be tempted to destroy it while these masses, in their carefully guarded ignorance still believe that the workers of England and America need to be saved from their capitalist exploiters and raised to the higher standards of the workers' fatherland.

It is to be hoped, because of the immense importance of this question, that there will be more studies, and more up-to-date ones, of these developments in the Soviet Union.

Both of the books are worthy of serious study even though they are not very easy reading. Especially is the Institute of World Affairs, a new venture of the New School for Social Research, to be congratulated for having produced the book on Russian Management as the first of their series of international studies. Methodologically it is particularly interesting for the way in which it goes beyond the limitation of such evidence as lie in dry statistics and enters into the spirit of their subject matter so as to give the reader a possibility of understanding greater than can ever be obtained by rigid sticking to "fact". It would be unjust to write a review without mentioning the brilliant introduction by Jacob Marschak who had the trying task of coordination of different authors and is thus largely responsible for the success of the venture.

ABBA P. LERNER

The Intelligence Office

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Re: "Free Press, Algiers Style"

The free-press issue has assumed central importance in the DeGaulle movement. Writing in the *N. Y. Times* of July 10, G. H. Archambault notes the rise of a secret organization, "L.L." ("Liberation et Liberte"), which is critical of both Vichy and Algiers. "The new movement may gain the public ear because of its insistence on liberty. At the moment, freedom of the press is the principal concern." A week later, a *Times* dispatch from Algiers reported a further big step towards totalitarian control of the postwar press in France: the adoption by the DeGaulle committee of a new press law "establishing a single French agency with exclusive rights to distribute all French and foreign news within France." This is an even more serious violation of freedom of the press than the April 15 ordinances, since it gives those in control of the government the power to control and shape *at its source* all political news.

Re: A Racially Segregated Army

Another letter has come in, from a member of the Navy Hospital Corps, giving testimony as to the practicality of unsegregated military units: "At the Great Lakes Naval Hospital, I was surprised to find Negro and white seaman bunking above, below, and beside each other in the same ward. Relations were excellent, even in cases where a white Southerner was placed next to a Negro. Moreover, there were Negro and white corpsmen working together in the same wards. Apparently, the Navy finds it too expensive to pursue a policy of segregation in the wards."

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Re: "The War of Tyrants"

Terence Donaghue writes in from Staten Island, N. Y.: "In enumerating the names suggested to President Roosevelt to replace the colorless 'World War II', Niccolo Tucci unaccountably omits the entry of Eleanor Roosevelt, quondam editor of a monthly entitled *Babies, Just Babies.* Mrs. Roosevelt is rumored to have suggested: 'War, Just War'."

COMMONWEALTH—LONDON WRITES TO MICHIGAN

(The following letter from Richard Acland, leader of England's Common Wealth party, to Frank Marquart apropos Marquart's letter in the March POLITICS *on the MCF Conference, is printed with the author's permission. It gives a lively picture of English leftwing politics from the inside.—ED.)*

Dear Mr. Marquart:

I am very interested in your letter in POLITICS on the work of the policy committee of the Michigan Commonwealth Federation. You may like to know something of the political organization under the name "Common Wealth" in Britain. The similarity between this party, the CCF in Canada and what I know of the MCF is that all three arise out of the fact that there is a deep aspiration for a really fundamental change which is not satisfied by any of the existing parties.

In this country, we see the Conservative Party clearly representing the interests of big business; and on the other hand we see confusion and indecision in the Labour Party. There are great numbers of good democrats and socialists in the rank and file of the latter movement—perhaps an out-and-out majority. But at the moment all the signs go to show that the center of gravity of effective power in the party is not minded to make any serious or thoroughgoing attack on monopoly capitalism, but would actually prefer to try to reach some sort of compromise between the powers of big business and the powers of the biggest Trade Unions. Members of Common Wealth see this "solution" clearly, and large numbers of citizens see it less clearly, as neither socialism nor democracy but as the British form of gentlemanly fascism". [*Or what is called over here "white fascism"—ED.*]

After that, as far as I can see, our respective organizations develop a certain amount of dissimilarity. Yours seems to start in the right place—from the most alert representatives of the workers. Ours, by a curious accident, started first mainly among middleclass technicians, professional people, plus a certain number of Christians who couldn't turn a blind eye to the fact that "Thou shalt promote thine own self interest" is the dead opposite of "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." However, as time went on we began to win the support of workers as individuals, though not ever as representing organizations. . . . We have about 10,000 members, about 400 branches. We have won two by-elections on our own account. . . .

I would also like to put to you another thing which we have discovered in our work here. When we are attacked by our enemies for being too Left and too Revolutionary, it pays every single time to lam back at them by going more Left and more Revolutionary. We lose every time if we try to give them a tame answer, assuring them that "really we aren't quite so revolutionary as they might think."

A good example of this took place at Skipton by-election (which we won). Just about that time I had been arguing our Compensation proposals in the House of Commons. . . . Unfortunately, when I said we'd give automatic 100% compensation for all socialised property holdings up to 1,000 pounds, this was reprinted in Hansard as 100 pounds. Therefore the Tory cry: "Common Wealth will strip you of all you've got over 100 pounds." Now if we'd turned tail on this and explained that what I really had said was 1,000 pounds, I'm sure we would have been sunk. So we decided to stick to our guns for the by-election and correct the matter at our conference which was then pending. We therefore advertised a meeting at which we undertook to answer "this 100 pounds business". Our answer was: "Now hands up all those who have more than 100 pounds of savings over and above their personal property such as house, clothes, furniture, books, etc." Naturally no hands. "Well, if that's a dirty way of asking the question, hands up those who have not as much as 100 pounds of savings." Naturally almost every hand in the whole meeting. "Very well then, will you please face the fact that Common Wealth is thinking for the overwhelming majority, and the Conservatives for the tiny minority." This I am sure was a positive election winner. . . .

Yours very sincerely,

RICHARD ACLAND

HOUSE OF COMMONS,
LONDON, ENGLAND

"THE END OF EUROPE"

I'm not at all in agreement with Macdonald about "The End of Europe". (*See "Comment", March issue. ED.*) I was, in fact, rather shocked to find in POLITICS so clear an expression of a point of view which generally reflects either the self-satisfaction of Americans or the despair of European refugees. Of course I realize that Macdonald was protesting against the anti-European policies of the Big Three rather than giving a theoretical analysis. Nevertheless. . . .

Consider the productive capacity of Europe, the quality and the numbers of its politically advanced masses, the importance of its intellectual centers (extinguished for the moment)—consider these relative to the same factors on other continents. Furthermore, I think we must free ourselves of the traditional psychology we have developed during a century of relatively wide-spread social peace. For thousands of years, man has flourished anew in the midst of natural and historical catastrophes. Neither hunger nor terror nor death on a large scale necessarily diminished the potential of human energy—sometimes, indeed, quite the contrary. After eight years of world war, civil war, famine, disease, terror and devastation, Russia recreated herself single-handed between 1922 and 1926, achieving at least a modicum of prosperity and a cultural renaissance of truly astonishing proportions considering the impasse she was in. Similarly, the European problem does not present itself simply in terms of devastation. The sufferings now being inflicted on the people of Europe may arouse reactions of an energy and intensity quite impossible to understand if we look at the matter through the eyes of peacetime middleclass psychology.

Certainly Europe has much greater resources than Russia had in 1917. All that I hear from abroad indicates that in France, for example, where political energies were at a low ebb between 1937 and 1941, an extraordinary revival is now taking place. (By "political energy" I mean the capacity for action of both individuals and masses.) This has not yet taken the form of any conscious political move-

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ments, expressing itself simply in continual struggles against oppression, which might be termed "defensive reflexes". But it seems impossible that consciousness will not develop later on.

My own feeling is that Europe is now going through her "Civil War" period and that much as the Civil War in the United States marked the advent of industrial capitalism, so the present world war marks the advent in Europe of various kinds of planned economies—so varied, indeed, as to threaten in some respects, our own political hopes and aspirations.

MEXICO CITY VICTOR SERGE

MORE COMMON SENSE, PLEASE!

Your Herzen quotation is irrelevant, incompetent and immaterial, as we lawyers say. Times change, and so do conditions. Today, a radical journal must be constructive as well as destructive. It must tell us, if it can, what it would *do* if it had the opportunity and power. You are against everything and everybody, except the Macdonald group. O.K., but what would you do if you were in the White House, or in Eisenhower's place? I see you object to "obliteration" bombing, but you do not say how you would fight the war. Criticism wholly negative is futile these days.

By the way, if you will re-read the Communist Manifesto, you will find, in addition to general ideas and philosophical theses, a perfectly clear and definite platform, proposals to meet *immediate* or *early* needs of the body politic. If Marx and Engels could afford to present a constructive and concrete program, you can afford to do it. It would require little space, it would show your readers just where you stand and what chances your program actually has in the foreseeable future. In short, your critics are right, and you have made no satisfactory answer to their perfectly proper and reasonable demand.

LA JOLLA, CALIF. VICTOR S. YARROS

——I agree that the reply to the critics of POLITICS' *alleged negativism was not adequate, and in the next issue I shall try to present a more thorough answer. Here we might clear one confusion out of the way. Mr. Yarros asks what I would do if I were in the White House, and how I would fight the war. If he means the present war and the present White House, without any basic social change, then I must answer that I wouldn't fight the war and wouldn't be in the White House. If he means a revolutionary war and a new society, then the first step that way is destructive criticism of the existing order. People will only listen to proposals for radical change if they are convinced they cannot somehow worry along with the old institutions.—ED.*

ARE WE MEN OR MAMMALS?

The following communication is printed in the hope it will aid POLITICS *readers to vote intelligently this fall. It effectively disposes of at least one vexing question: is Roosevelt serving God or Mammals?—ED.*

The basic concern of government is rightfully the coordination of faculties of human life, not the coordination of people. The sum total of all men everywhere is in kind only the potentialities of any man anywhere. I am unworthy the gift of human existence if I endorse a regime in Washington not in line with the preservation of and development of the higher abilities of my life.

Removal of Sewell Avery from his Montgomery Ward position by federal government constituted an affront to those powers which differentiate a human from a mere mammal. In throwing Mr. Avery out of his house of business, the Roosevelt administration said in effect to each of us not included in the New Deal bureaucracy: "You may not presume to possess talents relevant to a man capable of interpreting the scene about him and finding for himself the advantages which pertain therein."

I can not serve God by voting for a candidate disdainful of the most God-like attributes of my composition.

SPARTA, ILL. MARY ALLEN GRANT

Labor Action at the Shop Level

COMMENTING on Daniel Bell's "The Coming Tragedy of American labor" (*Politics*, March 1944), Ben Fischer warned labor party enthusiasts against the tendency to regard political action as a substitute for unionism. ". . . labor's direction is determined in the first place at the shop level . . . labor's real struggle concerns the daily relationships between Management and Employee." This view struck me as particularly pertinent to current labor developments in Detroit. Collective bargaining at the shop level seems to be progressively weakening. The shop steward system, often called the backbone of an industrial union, is losing its effectiveness. Once the unions relied on their internal organized bargaining strength for the settlement of major grievances. Today more and more important grievances are shunted from stage to stage and then finally forwarded to some outside party. Arbitration takes the place of genuine collective bargaining.

Workers are told that since labor must deal with the War Labor Board and other government agencies, their hope lies in political action. But there is a feeling among many union members that the growing emphasis on the political field *tends to replace rather than reinforce* labor's struggle in the industrial field. A story in the *Detroit News* of July 15 is suggestive in this connection: "Delegates to the Seventh Annual Convention of the Michigan CIO were warned by their leaders not to rescind the no-strike pledge. Political action, not strikes and industrial strife, was advocated as the weapon by which the CIO and all other organized labor can attain its economic demands. A threatened revolt against the no-strike pledge today brought George F. Addes, UAW-CIO Secretary-Treasurer, before the delegates to stamp out the rebellion, which was manifested Wednesday by a demonstration of disgruntled delegates . . . Political action has been emphasized as the theme of the convention by every speaker . . ."

The issue came up the other day when five irate committeemen of Ford Local 600 UAW-CIO threatened to give up their grievance duties. I asked one of them what was wrong.

"We don't want to let the union down," he said. "We'd like nothing better than to adjust grievances for the workers in our districts. But we're fed up. All we get is the old stall. The company supervisors don't bargain anymore. They think grievance procedure is something to thumb their noses at. Our contract grants us all the time off the job needed to settle legitimate grievances. What does the company care about the contract? When we leave our machines to investigate a grievance, we get docked. Sure, maybe in the end the Umpire will rule that the company must pay back the dockage, but in the meantime we get short-changed.

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"This doesn't offer much encouragement for committeemen. In fact, the boys are getting so they don't want to stick out their necks anymore. Even if we don't get docked, what good does it do us to take up a sound grievance? The foreman tells us to refer it to the second stage. So the building committee takes it to the labor relations man. A lot that helps He makes no effort to argue the case on its merits. He has fourteen days to make a reply and he tells the building committee to come back later. When the disposition finally comes through it's more likely than not to be unfavorable. That means the case goes to the third stage, where it is delayed some more and then passed to the next step.

"Meanwhile the guy at the machine wants to know what's happened to his grievance. He thinks his committeeman has gone back on him, and begins to wonder what to hell he is paying dues for. He loses faith in his union. Naturally, the company likes that. Management is sabotaging the union by sabotaging its grievance machinery. The union pledged not to strike for the duration, and, believe me, the company knows how to make use of that pledge to give the workers a hosing. Not only Ford, but G.M., Chrysler and the small independents are giving auto workers the business. I know because I talk to stewards from those plants.

"Getting the runaround is tough on the men and women operating the machines and running the assembly lines. They spend the best part of their working lives in the shop. An uncorrected speed-up saps a worker's strength. A prolonged health hazard lowers his resistance to disease. An improperly classified job amounts to an indirect wage cut. Grievance procedure is the collective bargaining machinery set up in the factory to remedy such conditions. But it takes two parties to bargain—and the bosses simply won't bargain in good faith. The backlog of written grievances in our unit tells the story.

"A certain element in the union keeps reminding us there's a war on. As if we don't know it! They tell us that since the strike's out for the duration, our hope lies in political action. Now I'm all for political action. I know only too well the power of government and the need to have labor represented in government. Actually I go further than most union members on this score, for I'm in favor of a third party. But the people in our union who have gone ga-ga over political action seem to think it's the cure-all for everything that ails us. This goes not only for those in the CIO Political Action Committee, but even for some of those active in the Michigan Commonwealth Federation.

"Well, let me tell you something. Getting the right crowd in Congress is swell. We need congressmen and senators to protect our interests on matters like taxes, social security, postwar problems, and a lot of other things. There's one thing, though, we shouldn't forget: Congressmen and senators can't settle our grievances in the shop. Only we workers can do that through a strong union with guts enough to fight for what's right. Without that kind of unionism we will come out on the short end. What will it profit us to abolish the 3-cent tax levy, if management can chisel nickels from our hourly earnings? Political action? Certainly! Without it we're lost. And without a militant union we'll be lost too. Labor needs two arms—one political, and the other economic. It will be just too bad for us if, while building up our political arm, we allow our economic arm to wither!"

DETROIT, MICH. FRANK MARQUART

CONTRIBUTORS

BRUNO BETTELHEIM, who lives in Chicago, is working on a longer study of Nazi concentration camp life, of which this article is part. . . . ROBERT DUNCAN is a young poet who lives in New York City. . . . WILFRED H. KERR is co-chairman of the Lynn Committee to Abolish Segregation in the Armed Forces. . . . MAURICE ZOLOTOW writes articles on Broadway life for the *Saturday Evening Post* and other magazines; he recently published a collection of sketches of theatrical life entitled *Never Whistle in a Dressing Room*. . . . ABBA P. LERNER's *The Economics of Control—Principles of Welfare Economics* has just been published by Macmillan.

"One cannot buy magazines from abroad nowadays, but I recommend any one who has a friend in New York to try and cadge a copy of POLITICS, the new monthly magazine edited by the Marxist literary critic, Dwight Macdonald. I don't agree with the policy of this paper, which is anti-war (not from a pacifist angle), but I admire its combination of highbrow political analysis with intelligent literary criticism. . . . Politically, the paper in this country most nearly corresponding to POLITICS would be, I suppose, *The New Leader*. You have only to compare the get-up, the style of writing, the range of subjects and the intellectual level of the two papers, to see what it means to live in a country where there are still leisure and wood-pulp."

—George Orwell in the London "Tribune"

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